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THE
HISTORY OF ITALY,

FROM

THE ABDICATION OF NAPOLEON I.,

WITH INTRODUCTORY REFERENCES TO THAT OF EARLIER TIMES.

BY

ISAAC BUTT,

FORMERLY PROFESSOR OF POLITICAL ECONOMY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
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ERRATA.—VOL. I.

THE reader will be good enough to make the following corrections in this volume :—

PAGE

- 38 note 4, line 4, *for* “him,” *read* “his successor Constantine.”
117 line 12, *for* “Roger,” *read* “Robert.”
168 line 12, Ditto.
181 note 7, line 8, *for* “Gregory X.,” *read* “Gregory XI.”
213 line 20, *for* “direct male descendant of Charles V.,” *read* “direct male descendant of the brother of Charles V.”
227 expunge *star* before Conrad III. He was not crowned by the Pope.
260 line 8, *for* “Victor Emanuel,” *read* “Charles Emanuel.”
339 *for* “Faregnano,” *read* “Favignano.”
343 line 13, *for* “days,” *read* “weeks.”

HISTORY OF ITALY.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

Introduction—Napoleon's Abdication an epoch in Italian History—Effect of revolutionary wars—Reconstruction of Social System of Italy—Not successfully accomplished by the Congress of Vienna—Difficulties of writing Italian History since that period—Necessity of acquaintance with the previous history of that country—Also with the previous history of each state—Plan adopted in this volume—Statement of its general outline—Abdication of Napoleon—Treaty between Napoleon and the Emperors of Russia and Austria and King of Prussia—Refusal of England to become a party—Memorandum of Lord Castlereagh—Qualified accession of the English Government—Division of Italy at the period of the Abdication—Kingdom of Italy—Italian Departments of French Empire—Murat King of Naples—Sicily and Sardinia continue in possession of their former Sovereigns—Restoration of Louis XVIII.—Treaty of Paris—Renunciation by France of the Conquests of Napoleon—Right of the Allied Powers over the Territories thus renounced—Stipulations as to Italy contained in Treaty of Paris—Divisions of Italy by Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle—Changed by Napoleon—All the Italian Continent under French Dominion—Provision of the Treaty of Paris for future Congress—Hopes excited among the Italians—Secret Articles of Treaty of Paris—Many Italian Questions disposed of at Paris—Return of Italian Sovereigns.

WITH the great events which marked the European annals of 1814, a new and a memorable era in Italian history commenced. In the beginning of that year the entire continent of Italy was subject to French

dominion. All the country north of the Neapolitan frontier was directly governed by Napoleon, either as King of the newly-erected realm of Italy, or as Emperor of France. The throne of Naples was filled by a sovereign of his creation. In the islands alone were found exceptions to the universality of French ascendancy. Sicily and Sardinia submitted to the rule of their ancient monarchs, who, when despoiled of the rest of their territories, still found in their insular possessions a retreat in which, at least, a remnant of their authority was preserved.

To Italy, therefore, the fall of Napoleon brought with it the change involved in the overthrow of a dynasty which had established over almost all her territories its sway. But this was not all. The country then emancipated from his power was an Italy very different from that into which, eighteen years before, the youthful champion of the revolution had led the invading armies of the French republic. The triumph of those armies, still more the spread of revolutionary principles, had broken up the old political and social system. All the former dynasties had been swept away. The ancient landmarks had been removed. The change in the minds of the people was as great as that in the territorial arrangements of the country. Italy had been conquered, but she had also been revolutionised. New doctrines swayed the convictions, new politics stirred the hopes, and new ideas filled the minds of men. The reconstruction of society was to follow the overthrow of the fallen sovereignty. This was the task to be undertaken by those upon whom devolved the responsibility of

disposing of those provinces of Italy which were left without a master by the breaking up of the empire of Napoleon.

That duty, it is true, was to be fulfilled under the control of claims of right which could not be disregarded. It was surrounded with difficulties, and complicated by embarrassments sufficient to prevent the settlement ultimately effected from being that which, perhaps, any of the persons who took part in it desired. The arrangements then adopted were framed with reference to what are termed European considerations : in other words, with the view of reconciling the rivalries, and balancing the interests and the ambitions of great powers. They could scarcely be expected to secure that which ought to have been the first object, the contentment and happiness of the Italian people themselves. Whatever may be said or thought of the general merits of the treaties of 1815, few persons will be found now, after the experience of the intervening period, to say that the problem of the reconstruction of society in Italy was successfully solved by the labours of the Congress of Vienna. It is still incomplete. It is gradually being accomplished in the struggles, the passions, and the sufferings that are constantly agitating the Italian nation. From whatever cause it has proceeded, the whole life of Italy for the last forty-five years has been one long, though often suppressed, struggle against the arrangements which were imposed at their commencement. The history, therefore, of this period is not to be found merely in the records of diplomacy, or the narrative of battles, it is the history of the passions and

sentiments of the nation : of their conflicts with those institutions which the councils of the allied powers established or restored. Difficult it may be even for a writer connected only by sympathy with Italy to trace such a history free from the disturbing influence of the very feelings it records ; still more, perhaps, to avoid offending the prejudices with which the impartial narrative of truth must unavoidably come into collision. To such an attempt the warning is still applicable which was addressed of old to the adventurous writer who was about to treat of the Italian commotions of the days immediately preceding his own :

“ Periculosæ plenum opus aleæ,
Tractas : et incedis per ignes
Suppositos cineri doloso.”

-These difficulties more or less meet us as inseparable from every delineation of events which the lapse of time has not entirely removed from the passions and interests of the present day. Were they to be deemed insuperable, they would deprive each generation of all history of the period upon which we most desire information, and in which our interest is deepest. They are not sufficient to deter from the effort truthfully to explore, and dispassionately to judge, the facts which the Italian movements of the last half-century present.

Those facts cannot be understood without a reference to the events of the periods that preceded them. In no country in Europe, is the present so completely interwoven with the past. In none have the transactions of bygone ages left an impress that is deeper or more distinct. This may possibly be the result of the

continued division of the country into separate communities, which has preserved the individuality of the elements of which the nation is composed. In approaching the later period of Italian history, we are introduced to the close of a drama, whose plot originates, as its earlier scenes occurred, in times long since gone by. Rightly to estimate the settlement which was attempted in 1815, and the struggles which have followed, we must take into our account the series of causes which for centuries have influenced the destinies and moulded the dispositions of the Italian people.

A sketch of the principal chains of events, which are thus carried down from the earlier periods of the Italian nation, is, therefore, indispensable as an introduction to the relation of the transactions which it is more peculiarly the object of these pages to record. In a brief retrospect of those events, it may be possible, without attempting a complete review, much less a detailed narrative of the incidents which belong to the history of preceding ages, so to present the general outlines of that history, as to bring into prominence those passages in its eventful annals which most aptly illustrate, or most clearly account for, the condition of the country in modern days.

The history on which we are entering, it will be remembered, is not that of a single power representing a united nation. Italy—one as it is by geographical position, by identity of language, and by that similarity of national 'character, which unmistakably subsists through all local varieties—has never attained that unity which in other European countries has consolidated

The same pages must record the closing fortunes of the chivalrous, but weak and vacillating Murat. They must relate his desertion of his friend and chief—his wavering and half-hearted adhesion to his new engagements—the machinations and plots which were formed in the congress against him—the implacable and unwearied animosity which exhausted every artifice of diplomatic skill to accomplish his destruction—and his own wild and fatal enterprise against the very power for whose alliance he abandoned the cause of Napoleon. They must trace him from his brilliant throne to scenes of disaster and defeat; follow him through the miserable wanderings of a houseless and lonely fugitive; and finally pursue his steps to the prison which he left to meet an untimely, and but for the heroism which ennobled it, an unhonoured death.

A review of the general result of the arrangements sanctioned by the deliberations of the congress of Vienna will include an examination of the departures which they involved from the political divisions existing before the revolutionary wars. The extinction of the republics of Lucca, Genoa, and Venice, the annexation of Genoa to Piedmont, and the great increase of the Austrian possessions will be considered in relation to the effect these changes have subsequently produced.

The history of the settlement of 1815 would be incomplete without a statement of those separate treaties which contemporaneously established secret relations between Austria and some of the Italian States. The changes which immediately followed the assumption of power by the sovereigns recognised by the Con-

times they are reduced, some care is still required, that clearness of narration may not be sacrificed to the effort to blend those, which are in truth, in many respects, separate and distinct histories, into one.

These observations will explain the plan upon which the two volumes, now about to be presented to the attention of the reader, are intended to be framed. In their earlier chapters attention will be called to some of the leading features of the past history of Italy. In this retrospect, those points will be selected which seem to have exercised the most important influence, and to have most contributed to that singular destiny which distinguishes Italy from every country on the face of the globe. Prominent in this retrospect must appear the origin and fall of that strange sovereignty, which German princes so long exercised over a country to which they were in every respect aliens—the growth of that temporal dominion which the See of Rome established over the central provinces of Italy—the struggles between Papal and Imperial power which distracted her people with the fierce contentions of civil and religious strife—the greatness and the glory of those republics which once illuminated the page of Italian history by the brightness of their freedom and their virtues, to darken it by the degradation of their vices and the gloom of their fall. The liberty and the civilisation which Italy, in the middle ages, communicated to Europe, will be traced to the fragments of the system of ancient Roman institutions, which, broken but not destroyed, survived the lapse of centuries, and preserved the elements of that municipal self-government which

still constitutes the only sure guarantee of the permanence of freedom. In reviewing these great outlines of the past, the consideration will naturally arise of those causes which have subjected Italy to the constant calamities of foreign invasion, of those which throughout the whole period of her history have prevented the creation of any one great Italian power, or any general confederation of her states, and which have left her to our own day to be partitioned and divided into departments arranged with reference to every consideration except a regard to the happiness, and a deference to the wishes, of Italy herself.

The chapters devoted to this general retrospect will be followed by the relation of the events which are more immediately connected with the settlement of 1815, and the reconstitution of the Italian states. While the narrative of those incidents which more peculiarly affect each of these states, will, as far as possible, be kept separate and distinct, it will be prefaced or interwoven by a sketch of so much of the past history as may appear to be connected with, or to throw light upon, the transactions that are described. The changes and vicissitudes experienced during the wars of the French Revolution will, in every case, be fully detailed. To previous history the reference will, in some instances, be fuller than in others. The origin of the House of Savoy will be traced to that which has been called, "the cradle of their dynasty;" their gradual acquisition of Italian territories will be shown, and the qualities pointed out, both in the people and their sovereigns, which, have given to Piedmont so peculiar and so proud a

position in Italian affairs. The long reign of Ferdinand of Naples will be dwelt upon in proportion to the importance of the events which are directly associated with the present condition of the dominion over which he ruled. The perfidious cruelties which followed his restoration, after the short triumph of French power in 1799—his long exile in Sicily—the plots of his queen to free herself from English control—the final establishment, or rather recognition, of a free constitution, under the protection or coercion of English arms—will all be told ; if not with the minuteness which would belong to a history of that period, yet with a detail sufficiently full to enable the reader to understand the influence which they have exercised upon the subsequent course of Sicilian and Neapolitan affairs.

The events of the years 1814 and 1815, will occupy what some will perhaps consider a more legitimate space in the pages of this narrative. This will include the successive restorations of the ancient sovereigns, and the policy which on their return each of them pursued—the deliberations of the allied powers—the final determinations of the congress—the annexation of Genoa to Piedmont—the surrender of Lombardy and Venice to Austrian rule—the fall of the kingdom of Italy—the efforts of its patriots still to preserve its independence—the protests and the struggles of the Genoese against the inevitable destiny to which they were consigned ; and, with a view of the intrigues, the influences, and the dissensions which prevailed among the assembled representatives of Europe, will constitute the history—so far as relates to Italy—of the treaties of Vienna.

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gress, although not formally sanctioned at its meetings, must still be considered as a portion of the arrangements which it made. With a narrative of these changes, and a general view of the consequent position of the country, it is hoped that there may be thus presented to the reader all the information that is requisite for a clear and distinct understanding of the condition of Italy at the close of those transactions which are often, although erroneously, described as the restorations of 1815.

This plan involves the devotion of a larger proportion of these volumes to the review of previous history than probably the reader might expect. This is explained by the observations already made upon the connection between the events of former ages and the aspect which Italy presents at the present day. Some acquaintance with its past is necessary to understand the present, or form any conjecture as to the future of any one of the Italian states. Tuscany still bears the marks of the wise legislation of Leopold the reformer. No one can appreciate the part which Piedmont is now taking in the affairs of Italy, who is not acquainted with the events that have marked its previous career. The Government of Naples is a mystery to those who have not traced, in the occurrences of former days, the origin of that system which, with an unhappy continuity of evil, maintains its existence even now. In no country perhaps, save one, have the traditions and memories of the past taken equal hold upon the hearts and imaginations of the people. They turn from their present condition to those days of which their historians have

written, and their poets have sung; when the free cities of Italy alone maintained the banner of liberty in Europe; to those days when, over the darkness of Christendom, Italy threw the light of religion, of literature, of art, of science, and of law. In the minds of a proud and imaginative people, these traditions became passions and hopes, and, when the French revolution "broke up" the political "fountains of the great deep," when it unlocked the sources of human passions, and stirred the depths of human thought, the burning desire to see Italy what it once was, or what an ardent imagination pictures it to have been, with unextinguishable fervour possessed the Italian heart. These sentiments may be the poetry of life—they become its reality when they are the actuating motives of great masses of men.

Those who are anxious to understand modern Italian history, will not find that the time devoted to the retrospect of the past is thrown away. If in the succeeding chapters those topics may not be selected which are the best calculated to supply the illustration that is sought, it will most assuredly be the fault, not of the subject, but of the writer. No excuse for failure can be found in the nature of that subject, nor yet any palliation in the labour and carefulness which that failure may have cost. If, on the other hand, these pages succeed in guiding the reader to a clearer view of the state in which Italy was left by the last of the settlements in which Europe attempted to secure her tranquillity, they will have conduced something to the right understanding of questions to which every day is giving deeper importance, and adding more general interest.

It will be convenient, before entering on these subjects, to devote the remainder of the present chapter to a brief statement of the circumstances immediately connected with Napoleon's abdication, and of the political position of Italy at the time of that event.

On the 5th of April, 1814, Napoleon Bonaparte signed at Fontainebleau that memorable act of abdication by which "he resigned for himself and his heirs all title to the thrones both of Italy and France." Surrendering the gigantic acquisitions which had been made by his genius and his power, the fallen emperor obtained from his conquerors stipulations which still left to him the semblance of his departed greatness. An Italian island was named as the place of his retreat. About eight miles distant from the shores of Tuscany lies the island of Elba, with an area of scarcely one hundred and fifty square miles, and a population not much more than 15,000. By an arrangement, which seemed more like that of romance than of policy, and which was in fact the result of a struggle between the romantic generosity of the Russian emperor and the more cruel, or more cautious suggestions of his allies, this little island was allotted as the sovereignty of a man for whose ambition the world itself had seemed too limited. His pride was gratified by still retaining that imperial title which so strangely contrasted with the extent of the little principality over which he ruled. For the support of his rank an annual charge was

and Russia and the King of Prussia, with the object of conceding to "Napoleon Buonaparte," and his family, the island of Elba, and the duchies of Parma, Placentia, and Guastalla. At the request of his three allies the Prince Regent, on behalf of his Majesty, assented to these dispositions, but expressly declared that he was not a party to any of the other stipulations contained in the treaty.

By the first article of this treaty, Napoleon, who had already abdicated the crowns both of France and Italy, renounced, both for himself and his descendants, and for every member of his family, all right of sovereignty or dominion over the French empire, the kingdom of Italy, and over every other country.

These acts of abdication and renunciation related only to those portions of the Italian peninsula of which Napoleon had been the sovereign. These were, first, the provinces included in that distinct kingdom of Italy which Napoleon had constituted in 1805, and of which, in the same year, he had assumed at Milan the iron crown ;—secondly, those which had been by successive acts incorporated with the empire of France.

The kingdom of Italy comprised within its limits all Lombardy, all the Venetian territories, and the Papal provinces which border on the Adriatic. The capital of this kingdom was Milan. It was governed by an executive, in theory at least, separate from that of France. Eugène Beauharnais as prince-viceroy represented the sovereign ; on his marriage with the daughter of the King of Bavaria, he had been formally declared successor to the crown. The affairs of this kingdom were

No persuasion could induce the English Minister to become, on behalf of his sovereign, a party to this treaty. The British Government had always with an almost religious scrupulosity refused to recognise Napoleon as Emperor. Were there no other objection, this was decisive. But besides this, England had invariably professed that she had no wish to force any particular form of government upon the French nation. To assent to an agreement by which she would bind herself to impose any terms upon the future government would have been inconsistent with this principle. All that could be obtained from Lord Castlereagh was a memorandum in which he engaged that the assent of his Britannic Majesty should be given to the treaty so far as it made a disposition of the island of Elba and the Italian Duchies. This memorandum skilfully avoided all use of the forbidden title, it equally kept clear of any mention of the pledge as to the future conduct of France, and even when assent was promised, it contained the reservation that "the act should be binding on His Britannic Majesty, only with respect to his own acts and not those of any third power."⁵

Still more cautious was the language of the formal act of accession by which Lord Castlereagh's engagement was fulfilled. In this act the treaty was recited as one entered into at Paris by the emperors of Austria

sional government. On the 3rd of April the senate and legislative council, formally deposed Napoleon, and established a provisional government. The emperor had abdicated on the 5th. On the 7th the senate determined to recall Louis XVIII. It was in this state of things that the treaty between Napoleon and the allied sovereigns was concluded.


⁵ See the memorandum and the formal act of accession at length, *Recueil des Traités*, p. 116.

never been able to extend his rule to the island of Sicily, where his rival Ferdinand had maintained himself in his sovereignty with the aid of British money and under the protection of British arms.

The King of Sardinia still occupied the island which gave the regal title to his house. To Sardinia or to Sicily the power of Napoleon had not reached. Trafalgar had annihilated the naval strength of the mighty conqueror. Supreme upon land, he was compelled to acknowledge the sea as the boundary of his power. His "control stopped with its shores." Even the narrow strait which separates Calabria from Sicily, as if the ocean wave possessed some mystic power, was wide enough to mark the barrier which he could not pass.

Such was the state of Italy when Napoleon signed the treaty of the 11th of April.

That treaty was one contracted with the Emperor altogether in his individual character. It did not profess to bind the states of which he had been sovereign. His resignation of the crown of Italy left the kingdom of Italy untouched; his abdication of the empire did not take from France the territories which his victories had won. The surrender of those territories must be made by some authority representing the French nation. From the returning Bourbon monarch, the allied powers proceeded to obtain the formal renunciation of those conquests. On one of the latter days of April, Louis XVIII. entered Paris, acknowledged as the King of France. With him, as the legitimate representative of the French nation, was concluded the treaty known



as that of Paris, which fixed the future boundaries of his kingdom.⁷

A sovereign placed upon his throne by the arms of the allies, whose troops still garrisoned his capital, was not likely to offer any very great resistance to the arrangements which those who were at once the conquerors of his country and his own protectors, might impose. Scarcely, indeed, had he been recalled to the throne of his ancestors, when, on the 23rd of April,⁸ he authorised the signature of a convention, by which all the conquests of France beyond her ancient frontier were resigned. The formal treaty was not signed until the 30th of May. By that treaty France was declared to preserve the integrity of its limits, such as they existed at the period of the 1st of January, 1792, with some "important augmentations," as they were rather pompously called in the document itself. France renounced all claim of sovereignty, possession, and supremacy over all countries, districts, towns, and places, whatsoever, situated without the frontier which was assigned. In the cautious language of this renunciation, the French king carefully avoided any recognition of the conquests of Napoleon as forming a portion of his French dominions. The restored family refused to acknowledge the legality of the power which had governed France in their absence.

The object of the treaty of the 30th of May, was to settle with Louis XVIII., as the representative of the French nation, the future boundaries of France. Questions, however, had already arisen which made it

⁷ Annual Register, 1814. State Papers.

⁸ Annual Register. State Papers.

necessary for the allied powers to include in its provisions, terms regulating their own conduct in the distribution of the territories which France had thus disclaimed. These countries were left by that renunciation, "waifs and strays" to be allotted to those who could best establish a right to their possession. Over them the allied powers might assert, and did, in fact, as to some, assert, the right of conquest ; it was the only basis on which several of their subsequent acts could be sustained. But this right was one, the exercise of which must be controlled by many considerations which virtually reduced, or ought to have reduced, it within narrow limits. With many of the sovereigns who had been deprived of their territories, relations of alliance subsisted which would make it difficult to set up against them such a right. It was, perhaps, in any case an ungracious claim to be enforced by those who had taken up arms to rescue Europe from territorial changes which they denounced as the usurpations of revolutionary and imperial France.

In relation to subsequent events, it is of importance to observe, that the acts of Louis XVIII. could only affect those territories which had been incorporated with the dominions of France. Over those which constituted the kingdom of Italy, the French monarch neither exercised, nor claimed to exercise, any right. The king of Italy had abdicated its crown ; but by that act he no more destroyed the separate and independent existence of the realm than by the resignation of the imperial sovereignty he had put an end to that of France.

As to Italy, the public treaty contained but two

stipulations. One was, that "Italy beyond the limits of the countries which should return to Austria should consist of independent states." The other provided for the restoration to its independence of one Italian state, and that one, strange to say, the little principality of Monaco. It was expressly declared by one of the articles of the treaty, that "the principality of Monaco was replaced in the same situation as on the 1st of January, 1792." The treaty further provided that within two months "all the powers who had been engaged on both sides in the war should send plenipotentiaries to Vienna, in order to regulate, in a general congress, the arrangements necessary for completing its dispositions."

In this stipulation of the treaty of Paris originated the Congress of Vienna. The five powers who signed that treaty invited the other states of Europe to send their representatives to a congress, not for the purpose of establishing any new system in the public law of Europe, but for that of consulting as to the arrangements requisite to complete the dispositions of the treaty itself.⁹

Many and grave were the questions which were still left open for future consideration. Those affecting general European interests it is not within the object

⁹ The first of the secret articles annexed to the Treaty of Paris provided that "the allied powers (that is, Austria, England, Prussia, and Russia) should have the free disposition of the countries which France renounced by the third article of the open treaty; and that the arrangements from which a system of permanent balance of power might result, should be arranged at the congress upon the basis agreed upon by the allied powers between themselves."—Capefigue: *Les Cent Jours*, p. 11.

of these pages to describe. Those which related to the future settlement of Italy arose out of the changes which French dominion had effected in her states.

The French revolution found Italy divided according to the settlement which had been adopted at the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1747. A Bourbon monarch ruled the two kingdoms of Sicily and Naples, or as the continental and island territories were fantastically designated, Sicily “di quâ del Faro,” and, “di là del Faro.” Another Bourbon prince possessed the Duchy of Parma in the North; Austria held the territories of the Milanese and the Duchy of Mantua, occupying the plain of Lombardy between the Ticino and the Adige. An Archduke of the imperial family ruled over Tuscany with its cluster of extinguished republics. Modena acknowledged as its duke the last representative of the once princely house of Este. The Pope was supreme in Rome, and the priestly rule of the Vatican extended along the shores of the Adriatic from the Tranto to the Po. Piedmont, from the Ticino to the Alpine ranges, was subject to the sway of the Princes of Savoy. Three of the ancient republics still survived: four, if we are to include in the number the almost village sovereignty of San Marino. Lucca maintained her independence. The territory of Genoa included all the shore which extends along the Apennines from the principality of Monaco to Spezzia. Venice held upon her *terra firma* a sovereignty as extensive as had belonged to her in the proudest days of her greatness.

In the plenitude of his despotic authority, Napoleon



had destroyed all the former order of things. He had trampled down the ancient republics, and obliterated even the names of the most time-honoured principalities. The queenly splendour of Venice had not saved the most glorious of republics from his iron grasp. Lucca had found no safety in those republican institutions, the origin of which is lost in the obscurity of remote antiquity. Imperial Rome herself had attracted no respect to the throne of the viceroy of Heaven upon earth. French soldiers had entered the Vatican by rude ladders irreverently placed against its sacred walls. The Pontiff, from whose hands Napoleon had received the chrism that gave him the sacred character of an anointed king, was carried away a prisoner under an escort of French dragoons. A few lines had disposed of the destinies of the city of the Cæsars; and an edict, dated from "the camp at Schönbrunn," almost with the imperious brevity of an order of the day, declared in language that at least had not the fault of circumlocution, that "the States of the Church were annexed to the empire of France."

In the division of its whole continent between the kingdom of Italy, the departments annexed to the empire, and the southern realm, French dominion was completely established over Italy. No national government was left. In the worst days of foreign invasion, the Pontiff, with better truth, said to the Doge of Venice, "There is nothing Italian left in Italy except my tiara and your ducal hat." Under the dominion of Napoleon, both the tiara and the ducal hat were gone. The Pope was a prisoner in France, and

Venice was a province of the Emperor's Italian kingdom. The only remnant of Italian nationality,—and, placed on the head of a stranger, it could scarcely be said to belong to Italy,—was the Lombards' iron crown.

Such was the condition of Italy with which the sovereigns at Paris, and in the Congress of Vienna, had to deal.

The language held by the representatives of the allied powers—the proclamations in which their generals had appealed to the Italian people—had excited in the minds of that people the strongest hopes upon the subject which, of all others, had acquired the deepest hold upon their hearts. An Austrian Archduke had summoned them, in a spirit-stirring proclamation, to aid the allied powers in restoring Italy to the rank she once held among the nations. A British general had landed on their shores, displaying a banner, on which was inscribed the sacred motto of “Italian independence.”¹⁰ The time was come when the people expected these promises to be fulfilled. All they knew of the treaty of Paris gave confidence to their hopes. Italy, except the portion that might revert to Austria, was to consist of sovereign states. If future arrangements were left open, that future was full of hope. Questions of the deepest interest and importance to Italy remained to be decided. In what manner was the promised nationality and independence of her states to be secured? Was Venice to resume her ancient

¹⁰ The Proclamation of the Archduke John of Austria, August 22nd, 1809, of Lord William Bentinck on landing at Spezzia, March 14th, 1814.

independence? Was the newly formed kingdom of Italy to become, in truth, a free and Italian principality? What provisions were to be made to secure constitutional government from those sovereigns who were to resume their old dominions? These were the questions which were everywhere asked with earnestness and hope, and on the allied powers and their approaching deliberation the eyes of Italian patriots were fixed.

While the hopes of Italy were thus turned to the coming congress, some of the questions upon which those hopes had been excited were already disposed of by one of those private arrangements in which diplomacy conceals its transactions. To the treaty, or rather treaties, of Paris (for a separate treaty was signed between France and each of the allied powers) were added several secret articles. One of these provided "that the possessions of his Imperial and Royal Apostolic Majesty should be limited by the Po, the Ticino, and the Lake Maggiore; that the King of Sardinia should re-enter on the possession of his ancient estates, with the exception of the part of Savoy assured to France; that he should receive an increase of territory from the states of Genoa; that the port of Genoa should remain a free port, the powers reserving to themselves to make arrangements on this subject with the King of Sardinia."¹¹

The contemplated congress did not assemble until October. Long before its meeting many more of the questions relating to Italy were disposed of by a

¹¹ Secret articles.—*Recueil des Traités*, p. 117; Capefigue: *Les Cent Jours*, p. 11.

general, although informal agreement of the allied sovereigns ; and when the diplomacy of Europe assembled its proudest representatives in the capital of Austria, several of the Italian princes had already resumed possession of their thrones.

CHAPTER II.



Retrospect of Italian History—Principal Features—The Power of the Popes—Of the German Emperors—Want of Italian Unity—Foreign Interference and Invasion—Rise and Fall of the Italian Republics—Origin of the German Empire in Italy—Fall of the Roman Empire of the West—Odoacer—Theodoric—The Lombard Kingdom—Its Iron Crown—Political position of Italy—Rome and Central Italy still subject to the Byzantine Emperors—Their Revolt—Leo the Iconoclast—Popular and Papal resistance to his Decrees—Aistolph, King of the Lombards, seizes Ravenna—Resisted by the Pope—The Pope appeals to Pepin—Visit of Pepin to Italy—He conquers the Exarchate—"Donation of Pepin"—Appointed Patrician of Rome—Charlemagne—He overthrows the Lombard King—Crowns himself as King of Italy with the Iron Crown—Elected Patrician and Consul of Rome—Crowned by the Pope Emperor of the West—Extinction of the Carolingian Dynasty—The German Nations elect a King—Native Kings of Italy—Some of them crowned as Emperors of the West—Disordered state of Italy—Otho the Great, King of Germany, is elected King of Italy—He is crowned Emperor by the Pope—Rule of the Saxon line of Emperors—Attempts to elect native Kings—Conrad the Salic invited to assume the Italian Crown—Dependence of Italy upon Germany established—Reflections on the Imperial Power—Territorial extent of its dominion in Italy—Imperial Prerogative—Early relations of the Empire to the Papacy—The first struggle of Imperial power—Popular Election of Bishops—The Pope elected by the Roman People—Scandals and Abuses in Pontifical Elections—Right of nominating the Pontiff conceded to Otho the Great—Resistance of the Roman People and Municipality—Constant contests and revolts—Successive Emperors assert the right by force—Treacherous Execution of the Consul Crescentius by Otho III.—Right of Popular Election re-asserted—Renewal of the former scandals—Deposition of three rival Popes by the Emperor Henry III.—Right of Nomination is conceded to him, and exercised during his reign without dispute—Reflections on the struggle—General abrogation of the Popular Election of bishops—Extent and Importance of the Change.

In the retrospect of the history of Italy since the

fall of the Roman empire, the eye rests at once upon some features which give to that history a character peculiar to itself.

The existence of the Papal power of necessity exercised an important influence upon the whole progress of events in the country where its seat was placed. The Primate of Christendom was the sovereign of an Italian state ; ruling over the city which had long been the capital, not only of Italy, but the world ; claiming at the same time authority over the hearts and consciences of all followers of the Saviour, in the name of a commission derived directly from the Most High. To the chair of St. Peter all Christian princes and governors were called on to do homage, and the influence of Rome was felt in every European community. The presence of such a power in the very centre of Italy, might naturally be expected to modify the entire course of national affairs ; and to the existence of the Papal sovereignty we have no difficulty in tracing some at least of the phenomena which present themselves to us in the strange history of this land.

Next in importance to the Papal power, our attention is attracted to that singular institution by which imperial rights over Italy were conceded to a sovereign, in every sense of the word a foreigner and a stranger. A German chief, without connection with Italy by birth, by residence, or even by possessions, was permitted, under the imposing names of King of the Romans and Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, to exercise a real, although imperfect, supremacy over the Italian states. This pretension did not rest in its trans-

mission from emperor to emperor upon any claim of hereditary descent. The dignity was elective, but no Italian had a voice in the election. The chosen chief of the Germanic confederation succeeded to the title, and was supposed to inherit the authority, of the Cæsars ; and seven Teutonic electors on the banks of the Rhine nominated at their pleasure the sovereign who claimed from Italy the homage and the rights that were due to her supreme Lord. Not the least strange of the incidents of this strange sovereignty, was the odd mixture of feudal pretensions with those which were said to have come down from the empire of Rome. The right of investiture was claimed in the name of the Cæsars, and the representative of Augustus asserted his title to the possession of the fiefs of the Roman empire by escheat.

Imperfect as was the rule of these German emperors in Italy, its existence, especially when combined with that of the Papal power, was sufficient to prevent the union of the lesser sovereignties into one monarchy, the process by which national dynasties were formed in almost every other country in Europe. It is probable that even the presence of the Holy See, would have prevented any one Italian prince from acquiring such ascendancy as might have enabled him to attach the rest as lieges of his crown. The paramount rights of the emperor at all times interfered, and Italy continued to be divided into a multitude of states and lordships, and cities without compactness or unity, supplying to her enemies a pretext for the observation that "Italy was a mere geographical designation."

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The remark is an obvious one, that the constitution of these two powers led almost inevitably to foreign interference in Italian affairs. The rule of the German emperors in itself amounted to this ; and the more imperfect their sovereignty, the more did this character belong to it. The most philosophical of Italian historians has well observed, that the emperor was scarcely known in Italy except as an enemy. By her connection with the Germanic empire, Italy was drawn into all the quarrels of Europe in which that empire took part ; and in disputing the authority of the German in Italy, the other European powers soon learned to claim possessions within her borders as their own.

The imperial crown was not limited to any one family or even nation. Its disputes or its possession attracted to Italy the ambitions of all Europe. Francis I. of France made wars in Italy against his successful rival for that dignity. The imperial power of Charles V. annexed to the crown of Spain a dominion over the fairest provinces of Italy, which, under his successors in the Spanish monarchy, proved the worst tyranny that ever afflicted any portion of the Italian soil.

If the Papal power may be said to have extended in one sense the influence of Italy over Europe, its existence invited, on the other hand, the influence of European powers to Rome. The ecclesiastical chief of Christendom could never be a mere Italian prince. The Christian world had an interest in the direction of his policy, and in the defence of his rights. The “father of the faithful” could scarcely avoid appealing to the protection of his children when his

privileges were assailed. The intrigues of Europe too often gathered round the chair of St. Peter, and the pretexts of many invasions of Italy were found in the assertion of the real or supposed rights of the Papal See.

When the nations of Europe had become consolidated into great military monarchies, their kings soon learned to make use of these opportunities of seizing, for themselves or their families, upon provinces which were among the fairest regions of the earth. No Italian dynasty was strong enough to oppose them : the circumstances of the country prevented any permanent confederation in defence of its rights ; from the close of the fifteenth century we find Italy the scene of wars in which French, German, and Spaniard contended for her spoils, until at last her land was parcelled out among strangers, and, in the list of her sovereigns, we look in vain for even one purely Italian prince.

Whatever may have been the results of the natural tendency of her constitution in later times, there was a period when, under that constitution, Italy attained to a greatness, a prosperity, and a glory with which no other country in Europe could compare. In the ages which we are accustomed to call dark, at a time when the rest of Europe was struggling to emerge from barbarism, and enslaved under institutions which made the mass of the people serfs, Italy was great, prosperous, and free. In the middle of the twelfth century all its northern provinces were studded with free republican cities whose grandeur and opulence attested a prosperity in the country which we can scarcely find realised in

the most favoured nations of modern times. The glories of Venice and Genoa are emblazoned on every page of the history of the middle ages. It was not only in the great national republics that commerce had enriched their people, and taught them the free spirit of independence. Every district had its city, within whose walls a prosperous and free community dwelt, nominally, indeed, submitting its allegiance to the emperor, but maintaining, at the same time, a real and complete independence. They exercised, over an area more or less extended round their walls, all sovereign rights—governed by their own laws—electing their own magistrates—and glorying in a form of government which recalled not only the memory, but the reality of the proud freedom which belonged in ancient times to the democracies of Greece and Rome.

The existence of these numerous and great republics forms the brightest, as their gradual extinction does the most melancholy, chapter in the history of Italian affairs. It requires all the strong confirmation of the indisputable testimony by which they are supported, to obtain implicit assent to the accounts that have come down to us, of their power, their liberty, and the spirit of their people. In these cities were preserved the elements of freedom—from their institutions Christendom was taught the lessons of that municipal self-government which has obtained for the nations of Europe whatever liberty they now enjoy. Over the darkness of its most gloomy period they diffused the light of literature, of science, and of civilisation. It would almost seem that in imparting the sacred flame to Europe, they exhausted

its sources within themselves. The freedom and the blessings they communicated to other countries, they failed in retaining for their own. From reflecting on the obligations which Europe owed to their influence and example, we turn with equal wonder and regret to the story of their extinction ; and in contemplating the rapidity of decay of those communities in which we might have supposed all the elements of vitality to exist, we are almost disposed to say that the greatest marvel of history would be the grandeur of their power, if its narrative were not followed by the still more surprising record of their fall.

In the brief outline of Italian history which follows, the reader will find his attention principally directed to these subjects—the influence which the Papal power, the rights of the German emperors, and the contests between them, have exercised upon the fortunes of Italy—the rise and fall of her republics—the want of any centre of unity among the elements of which the nation has been composed—and her exposure to those invasions of foreign armies by which the powers of Europe so often devastated, and at last partitioned her soil.

Few incidents in history supply us with a more striking instance of the power of old names and old associations than that which is to be found in the long continuance of the title, and, in some degree at least, of the authority of Emperor of the West. After the division of the Roman empire, this title was assigned to

the sovereign who, with the rank and authority of Cæsar, continued at Rome to rule over the Western provinces. Strange indeed that it should have been borne for centuries, with at least the semblance of legitimate claim, by the chief of a Teutonic confederation ; and that, after the lapse of ages, when its practical authority had long since ceased, and its once high prerogatives been forgotten in disuse, the very name should still command the homage which man involuntarily pays even to the shadow of ancient and prescriptive right.

In the year 476 the seizure of Rome by Odoacer extinguished the separate existence of the Empire of the West. The sovereigns of Constantinople assumed that upon this event the whole empire became reunited under their sway, and such was the power of the mighty name of Cæsar that Odoacer was content to govern Italy under their delegation and in nominal subjection to the imperial power. Patrician of Rome was the title under which he ruled the city as the supposed representative of the Byzantine emperor.¹

Thirteen years later the great Theodoric established the Italian kingdom of the Ostrogoths. He did so under the authority of an imperial grant.²

¹ Odoacer was called by his followers King of Italy, but he himself never assumed that title. On the forced resignation of the last Western Emperor, Augustulus, the senate of Rome sent a deputation to the Emperor Zeno, desiring that there might be only one Emperor, and praying that Zeno would invest Odoacer with the title of Patrician. Odoacer was King of the Heruli. See Gibbon, chapter 36.

² Theodoric entered Italy under an express commission from Zeno, who, conferred on him the country, and authorised him to recover it from the usurper Odoacer. After a long and sanguinary conflict the authority was

During his own reign all the forms of the Roman institutions were rigidly observed, and throughout the sixty-four years of the Ostro-Gothic dynasty the Byzantine court asserted in theory a sovereignty over Rome. In the middle of the sixth century that theory became reality by the conquests of Belisarius and Narses. About the year 552, by the victorious lieutenants of the emperor, the rebel kingdom of the successors of Theodoric was subdued. Justinian was acknowledged as sovereign of all Italy and emperor of Rome. The government was delegated to an exarch or imperial lieutenant, who fixed his residence at Ravenna. A prefect, still bearing the title of Patrician, was civil governor of Rome, and under this authority, exercised in the name of the feeble and distant court of Constantinople, Rome itself and the districts round Ravenna remained for more than two centuries.

Over the rest of Italy the Byzantine emperors retained their recovered dominion for only fifteen years. In 554, Narses had completed the subjugation of the kingdom of the Goths. In 568, the Longobards or Lombards, under Alboin, had fixed the seat of a realm of Italy at Pavia, and wrested from the emperors the greater portion of the Italian soil.

divided between them. Odoacer was soon after assassinated at a banquet. For the reign of Theodoric, see Gibbon, chapter 39.

Well would it have been for Italy if all her sovereigns had acted on the maxim of this barbarian and heretic king, "To pretend to a dominion over the conscience is to usurp the prerogative of God. By the very nature of things the power of sovereigns is confined to external government. They have no right of punishment except over those who disturb the public peace of which they are the guardians. The most dangerous heresy is that of a sovereign who separates from himself a part of his subjects because they believe not according to his belief."—*Letter of Theodoric to the Emperor Justin.*

During the two hundred years that intervened between this period and Charlemagne, the Lombard kings were masters of Italy from the foot of the Alps to a frontier that extended far into the districts which afterwards constituted the Papal States. The kings of this realm were crowned at Monza, with that celebrated crown, the gift of the mother of Constantine to her imperial son. Inside its golden diadem it is encircled by an iron rim which tradition asserts to have been formed of the nails used in the construction of the cross. From the Maritime Alps to the Adriatic the dominion of these sovereigns extended. In all Northern Italy, Venice alone maintained in her island home her independence of their sway, yielding to the Greek emperors what was rather a graceful recognition of ancient sovereignty than a submission to any existing rule.

In the south, the Lombards succeeded in establishing the Duchy of Benevento, with territories nearly co-extensive with the present kingdom of Naples. The republics of Naples and Amalfi, with some other towns on the southern coast of Calabria, retained their allegiance to the Byzantine emperor, who was represented at Bari by an officer or commissioner known by the name of Catapan.³

In Central Italy the Exarch of Ravenna exercised the authority of his imperial master. Within the city of Rome itself that authority was controlled by, if not divided with, the growing influence of its bishop. In a city which still retained at least the form of its

³ "καταπαν," κατὰ πᾶν: General Commissioner.

republican institutions—it is very easy to conceive the position of rank and power which naturally devolved upon its Pontiff under the government of emperors residing on the shores of the Bosphorus. Elected by the people—dwelling in the midst of them—invested by his office with a sacred character, and supported in that office by a clergy whom wealth had not yet seduced from the zealous discharge of their ministrations—the bishop of the Roman see gathered round his person the affection and the veneration of the people. Their national feeling was interested in supporting an independent native authority derived from the free suffrages of themselves. Their pride was equally engaged in maintaining the high rank of their bishop as admitted Patriarch of the West. As far as history throws any light upon this period, it would seem that the personal character of the pontiffs was calculated to maintain the influence which their very position almost of necessity gave them.

Thus matters stood in Italy, when the zeal of the Byzantine emperor against the use of images, involved him in a quarrel with the Pope.

Leo the Isaurian, better known in history as the Iconoclast, determined to remove from the churches those images which he regarded as receiving from the people a veneration that amounted to idolatry. The consequence was a religious war, which resulted in the complete revolt of Rome from the authority of the Eastern Cæsars—the overthrow of the Lombard kingdom—and ultimately in the establishment of that new empire of the West, which created relations between Italy and

the Teutonic nation, the influence of which has not yet passed away.⁴

The dates of these transactions are not very accurately fixed. In the closing years of the pontificate of Gregory II., probably about the year 726,⁵ Leo issued his edicts against images, the attempt to enforce which provoked the fiercest resistance in Rome. Under the guidance of Gregory, the Roman people set the edicts of the emperor at defiance. Luitprand, the Lombard king, took part with the Pontiff and the images of the saints. He drove the exarch from Ravenna, and after a sanguinary struggle an attempt of the Greek emperors to recover possession of the city was repulsed.⁶

The Lombard king was no doubt influenced in this

⁴ When Leo first issued his edicts against the images, it would appear that he acted on the authority vested in the imperial power. It was not until the year 752 that the unanimous decision of three hundred and forty-eight bishops assembled in the council of Constantinople supported him in this course. A few years later that decision was unanimously rescinded by another council at Nicea, in which many of the same bishops took a part.

Those who wish for information on the history of this controversy, will find it in Dean Milman's History of Latin Christianity (vol. ii. ch. 6, 7, 8). It is superfluous to acknowledge the obligations which these pages owe to the rich stores of research and learning contained in that splendid work.

⁵ The following are the dates of the accessions of the pontiffs and the Lombard kings, who were engaged in these transactions.

POPES.			A.D.	LOMBARD KINGS.			A.D.
Gregory II.	.	.	.	715	Luitprand	.	712
Gregory III.	.	.	.	731	Hildebrand	.	736
Zacharias	.	.	.	741	Rachis	.	744
Stephen II.	.	.	.	752	Astolph	.	749
Stephen III.	.	.	.	752	Desiderius	.	757
Paul I.	.	.	.	768			
Adrian I.	.	.	.	772			

⁶ On the 26th of June, 733, the army of the emperor attempted a landing at Ravenna. The citizens repelled their attack with such slaughter, that the stream of the Po, which then ran nearer to Ravenna, was choked with corpses. Its waters were red with blood, and for six years the people would not eat of its fish.—*Muratori, in anno. Gibbon, chap. 49.* A second fleet, sent under the

course by the anxiety to avail himself of an opportunity of extending his power, and possibly establishing his complete ascendancy over Italy. With the fall of imperial power, the sovereignty of the Lombards appeared to have no rival to oppose it. The complete recognition of that sovereignty seemed almost the natural consequence of the alienation of Rome from the Empire of the East. A residence of nearly two centuries in Italy, during which thirteen princes had successively occupied the throne, had naturalised the Lombard race. Their rule had been wise, generous, and just; and Italy might have accepted without dishonour a native sovereign, to whom the iron crown of Constantine had been transmitted in direct descent from Alboin, through twelve Italian born kings.

The animosities of race were not extinct. There is no doubt that the opposition of the Pontiff prevented the establishment of an Italian monarchy under the sceptre of the Lombard king; but in that opposition the Church only represented the fierce hatred which was borne to the Lombards by the inhabitants of Rome. The enmity was reciprocal. If the haughty dwellers in the imperial city professed to despise the strangers as barbarians, the stern soldiers of the north retaliated by upbraiding them with their sensuality, their falsehood, and their sloth.⁷ The Roman hatred of the Longobards

command of Manes, was dispersed by a storm.—*Milman*, book iv. chap. ix. Stories of miracle were not wanting to represent both events as the interposition of heaven on the behalf of the defenders of the images of the saints.

⁷ The Lombard Bishop Luitprand, writing nearly 200 years later, thus vents the hatred and contempt of his nation for the degenerate Romans:—

“ Quos (Romanos) nos, Longobardi scilicet, Saxones, Franci, Lotharingi, Bajoarii, Suevi, Burgundiones, tanto dedignamur ut inimicos nostros,

at last found vent in the popular accusation, which charged them with a national infection of leprosy, a disease, the origin of which, even a pontiff, in strange forgetfulness of Jewish history, did not hesitate to attribute to them.⁸ Perhaps, in the eyes of pontifical orthodoxy, a worse taint appeared in the suspicion of those Arian doctrines which, in common with most of the northern invaders of Italy, they had held. Whatever was the cause of their determined opposition, no profession of the true faith or of devotion could reconcile the pontiffs to Luitprand's claims. In vain he dutifully offered his cross, his sword, and his armour at the shrine of the Apostles. Even the rule of a distant heretic emperor was preferable to that of a resident Lombard king; and the very Pope who accepted Luitprand's aid in resisting the execution of the iconoclast edicts, invoked that of the Venetians to replace the exarch in Ravenna.

Either from loyalty, or from a fear of the ascendancy of the Lombards, Gregory, in his resistance to the iconoclast edicts, was careful not to renounce his allegiance to the imperial rule. The Roman senate, compelled by the popular excitement, proposed the election of a new emperor, and an expedition to Constantinople

commoti, nil aliud contumeliarum nisi 'Romane!' dicamus; hoc solo, id est Romanorum nomine, quidquid ignobilitatis, quidquid timiditatis, quidquid avaritiæ, quidquid luxuriæ, quidquid mendacii, immo quidquid vitiorum est comprehendentes."

⁸ Pope Stephen, in dissuading Charlemagne from his contemplated marriage with the daughter of Desiderius, wrote to him, "Hæc proprie diabolica immissio est. Quæ est talis disipientia quod vestra præclara Francorum gens perfidâ ac fœtentissimâ Langobardorum gente polluat, quæ in numero gentium ne quaquam imputatur, de cujus natione et leprosum genus oriri certum est."—Capefigue, *Life of Charlemagne*. *Codex Carolinus*.

to place him on the throne. The design was prevented by the interposition of the Pope. The fury of the people was excited to the utmost by reports, well or ill-founded, that messengers were sent from Constantinople to attempt the life of Gregory. The Duke of Rome fell a victim to the popular passion. The Exarch of Ravenna was killed in a tumult in that city.⁹ Oaths were fiercely taken by excited crowds, which bound every man among them to defend their pontiff with their lives. The Pope endeavoured to restrain the violence of the multitude, and some of those who were suspected with reason of having come upon the errand of his assassination, owed their lives to the interference of the man whose destruction they had been sent to accomplish. He was successful in maintaining, at least the show of allegiance to the Byzantine court. The new exarch who was sent from Constantinople was permitted to reside at Ravenna. Upon the death of Gregory, in 730, the election of his successor was submitted to the imperial representative for approval.¹⁰ Several years later, the head of a pretender to the empire was sent to Constantinople as the token of the loyalty of the Roman people.¹¹

Luitprand had made the popular commotion the pretext for occupying the provinces that belonged to the empire, and he continued the occupation when the revolt had been successful in its object of defeating the execution of the iconoclast decrees. The seizure of

⁹ Muratori, in anno 730.

¹⁰ Milman's *Latin Christianity*, vol. ii. p. 212.

¹¹ Muratori, in anno.

these territories was a wrong upon the Roman Republic, the name by which, under all the vicissitudes of its rule, the Roman commonwealth was known. The demand for the restitution to the republic of these territories was made in the name of the emperor, the senate, the people, and the Church. Luitprand retained them in defiance of that demand.

It needed no great sagacity to see that the extension of their dominion over these provinces made the Lombard kings the masters of Italy, and involved the subjugation at no distant day of the imperial city to their rule. The struggle was no longer against the power of the Greek emperor, but against those Lombard encroachments which plainly menaced Rome. The court of Constantinople could offer no protection ; the Roman people were too far enervated from their ancient vigour to defend themselves. Against the dreaded power of the Lombards, the Popes sought—in the name of religion—aid, which secular influence could never have attracted to Rome.

The attention of Europe was then turned to Charles Martel, who, at Tours, in 732, had driven back that Mahomedan invasion which threatened to reduce all Christendom beneath the Mussulman sway. So early as 739, some say at an earlier period,¹² application was made for help against the Lombards to the chieftains of France. In that year, certainly, ambassadors were sent to Charles Martel, imploring his aid to the Pontiff, the people, and the Church of Rome. With letters which express a terror of Lombard rule

¹² Anastasius. *Vita Stephani*. *Ital. Scriptores*, vol. iii.

that is almost indescribable, the keys of the sepulchre of St. Peter were submissively sent to the Frankish hero, and the offices of patrician and consul placed at his disposal on condition that he would rescue the holy city of the Apostle from the menaced tyranny of the Lombard.¹³

Charles Martel and Luitprand were united by bands of the closest alliance. Luitprand had crossed the Alps to aid Charles against the Saracens. According to a usage of the times, Pepin, the heir of the Frankish king, had been with great ceremony accepted as an adopted son of the monarch of Pavia.¹⁴ These considerations may possibly have had their weight, but it was not until many years later that any aid was given to Rome from the side of France. The chief obstacle to the total subjugation of Italy to Luitprand appears to have been found in the hostility of the Lombard Duke of Spoleto, who had always asserted his independence of the king, and from the beginning of the troubles had been the close ally of the Pope and the people of Rome.¹⁵

When Luitprand actually approached Rome with an invading army, in 741, Pope Zacharias proceeded to his camp, and succeeded in effecting a reconciliation, in which the exarch, the Lombard monarch, and the Church and people of Rome, were all included. Luitprand, however, still retained possession of the provinces he had seized. The Pope undertook a journey to Pavia in 743, and by the power of his remonstrances

¹³ Muratori. Letter of Gregory in *Codex Carolinus*.

¹⁴ Muratori *ad annum* 735; *Paulus Diac.*, lib. vi. c. 58.

¹⁵ Muratori.

succeeded in inducing the Lombard king to restore two-thirds of these provinces; the remaining third was retained until the result of an embassy sent to Constantinople should be known.

From this visit of Zacharias to Pavia a truce subsisted between the Roman and the Lombards for a period of some time. In the days of Pope Stephen II. and King Astolph the quarrel was renewed. Astolph occupied once more the exarchate. An imperial ambassador was sent from Byzantium to join the pontiff and the Roman people, in insisting on its restoration. The Lombard monarch declined, or evaded compliance with the demand. A pressing message was sent by Stephen to the emperor, imploring him to send an army to enforce his authority. A reply arrived, announcing that no assistance could be expected. Astolph marched his army towards Rome, and Italy seemed destined to fall under the dominion of the Lombard king.

Letters and embassies to Pepin, the son of Charles Martel, had been already tried in vain. Stephen determined to try the effect of a personal appeal to Astolph at Pavia (A.D. 753). He was received with respect, but his mission was without success. At Pavia the Pontiff met some of the followers of Pepin. Encouraged by their representations, he determined to cross the Alps personally, to solicit from Pepin the assistance which letters and embassies had failed to obtain.

Continuing his journey northward, he escaped by hard riding the troop which the king had sent to intercept his passage.¹⁶ Pepin returned with the Pontiff, at

¹⁶ Muratori. The King at first, in the awe of his presence, assented to his

the head of an army, and Astolph invested in his royal city of Pavia, was compelled to enter into a compact to give back the usurped provinces to Rome, a compact confirmed by the solemnity of an oath. Hardly, however, had Pepin's army recrossed the Alps, when Astolph forgot both the compact and his oath. The provinces were not restored, and the army of the Lombards advanced to the walls of Rome.

Pepin was not slow in responding to the appeal made to him by Stephen, in a letter written in the name of St. Peter, promising him everlasting salvation, as the reward of the rescue of Rome.¹⁷ Astolph was forced by the approach of a French army to withdraw his troops from Rome. Pepin now compelled, not merely a promise, but the actual restitution. The great object was attained—the Lombard encroachments were driven back—the Lombard kingdom was restrained within its ancient limits—the Roman territory was free. To

journey: when he had left him some time, he sent a body of horsemen in pursuit. Had they overtaken Stephen, the whole history of Italy might have assumed a very different form.

There is no doubt that Pepin was influenced by gratitude to the Pope for the essential service he rendered him in crowning him on his visit king of France—an act which gave the sanction of the Church to his acceptance of the invitation given to him by the French people to assume the sovereignty which was nominally possessed by the effete and imbecile race of the Merovingian kings.

¹⁷ The correspondence of this period between the Popes and the Frankish sovereign is very fully preserved in a collection made, at least in great part, by Charlemagne himself, and which is known as the *Codex Carolinus*. The *Codex Carolinus* occupies the 98th volume of Migne's "*Patrologiæ cursus completus*."

In one of these letters the Pope writes to Pepin in the name of St. Peter, commencing the strange epistle with the words, "Peter, by the will of God the Apostle of Jesus Christ, to Pepin, King of the Franks and Patrician of the Romans."

whom should the surrender be made? Pepin had crossed the Alps from motives of religious devotion. It was natural that he should desire to consecrate the result of his expedition by a religious offering, in accordance with the piety of its motive. No one had a better claim to represent the Roman republic than the Pontiff, to whose energy and that of his predecessors, the preservation of Rome from the Lombards was due. Throughout all the transactions he had appeared as the chief and the representative of the Roman state. The successor of St. Peter was on every ground the most suitable person to whom the provinces should be reconveyed. Pepin resolved that it should be so. It was to the deputies of the Pope that the cities of the restored districts were desired to open their gates and formally give up their keys. Not content with the delivery of possession, Pepin insisted on the execution of a formal deed by which the usurped provinces were surrendered. The exarch, who still represented the shadow of imperial authority, claimed their surrender to himself, but Pepin replied that he had come to show his devotion to St. Peter. A deed by which the territories of the exarchate were restored to St. Peter and his successor, and to the church and republic of Rome,¹⁸ was solemnly deposited by Pepin on the tomb of the Apostle; and the

¹⁸ No record of this deed remains: its existence has been doubted; but it would appear without reasonable grounds. There seems no valid foundation for questioning the fact, that when he compelled restitution of the usurped territories, he had the surrender made to the Pope. It may, perhaps, be considered certain, that the deed reserved the imperial rights, and that the surrender was made to the Pope as representing the Church and people of Rome; but it is equally certain that it conferred, and was intended to confer,

Frankish chieftain, already king of France, returned to his dominions, invested, amid the grateful acclamations of the rescued citizens, with the dignity of Consul and Patrician of Rome.¹⁹

Twenty years later (A.D. 775), Charles, the son of Pepin, led once more a French army into Italy to overthrow for ever the dynasty of the Lombards. In opposition to the earnest and vehement remonstrances of the Pope, he had married the daughter of Desiderius, the King of the Lombards. Ambitious views had entered into the considerations which induced this marriage. Desiderius had no son, and his brother, Carloman, having wedded the only remaining daughter, Charles regarded himself as heir to the Italian crown. Not many years after his marriage he divorced his queen. Her indignant father claimed from the Pope the recognition of his grandchild, the son of Carloman, as rightful heir of Pepin ; such, it was said, was the origin of a dispute which again made the Lombards menace Rome. Charles hastened into Italy to support the Pontiff in a quarrel which was in reality his own.

After two years investment of Pavia, he obtained the

upon the Pontiff all the rights which the Exarch of Ravenna had exercised. It was not only the first establishment of a territorial sovereignty in the Pope, but also the first formal identification of the Roman Church and State.

¹⁹ See the observations on this transaction, *post*, vol. ii. chap. v. The above account is that which is collected from a careful examination of all the records of the period. Those who may desire to judge for themselves may consult the annals of Muratori, and those of Baronius, from the years 726 to 754—the letters in the Codex Carolinus, and the lives of the Popes of the period, collected in Muratori, “*Italicarum rerum scriptores*,” and in Migne’s *Patrology*, vol. 148—among modern writers, Milman’s *Latin Christianity*, and for an able and temperate statement of the views of the Papal Advocates, Miley’s *History of the Papal States*.

abdication of Desiderius ; and, in the cathedral of Milan, he placed on his own head the iron crown which he had once expected to gain in another right than that of conquest. He altered none of the laws, he abolished none of the customs, he confiscated none of the fiefs of the Lombard realm : in passing under the dominion of a Frank monarch, the Lombards felt no change. Grants of lands which he contrived to find for some of his Frank followers constituted the only sign that a new dynasty reigned.

Approaching Rome, he was met on the classic slopes of the Aventine by a procession of the magistrates and people, who hailed him by the title of Patrician. In the ceremonies of Passion Week, he walked on the right hand of the Pontiff ; the senate renewed for him the office of Consul, and saluted him as Liberator of Rome. Before returning to France he confirmed and extended the grants which his father had already made.

King of France and Italy and Patrician of Rome, with dominion extending over Germany, Hungary and Spain, Charles ruled territories not unworthy of the old empire. Upon the occasion of one of his visits to Rome, it was determined to revive in his person the almost forgotten dignity of the Emperor of the West. The time was come when all allegiance to the Greek sovereigns might, with safety and advantage, be thrown off ; and on the last year of the century (A.D. 800), at the festival of Christmas, after the celebration of the solemn rites of the day, Pope Leo placed upon his head, in the church of St. Peter, a golden crown, while the people shouted, "Long live Charles Augustus ! Long

live the Emperor of the Romans! Long live Charles the Great!"²⁰

Thus, in the person of a French, or rather German potentate, was created that new Empire of the West, the claims arising from which occupied the attention of statesmen in discussing the provisions of the treaty of Paris in 1814, more than a thousand years afterwards. Throughout the whole course of those thousand years, Italy has felt the consequences of the act which placed her diadem on the brow of a stranger. The election of a national emperor, or the elevation of the Lombard king, would have given Italy her place among the nations of the earth. One opportunity, at least, of establishing the independence and unity of Italy was lost.

Strange were the consequences which flowed from the ecclesiastical dispute upon the subject of images. It produced, in the words of the historian of Latin Christianity, "the total disruption of the bond between the East and the West, the severance of the Italian province from the Byzantine empire, the great accession of power to the Papacy which took the lead in this revolution, the introduction of the Frankish kings into the politics of

²⁰ It is said that Charles was unaware of the intention when he went to the Church. The act of the Pope was the result of a council, in which many persons were joined.

"Visum est ipsi Apostolico Leoni et universis sanctis patribus qui in ipso concilio cum reliquo Christiano populo ipsum Carolum Regem Francorum imperatorem nominare decrevissent; qui ipsam Romam tenebat, ubi semper Cæsares sedere soliti erant—seu reliquas sedes quas ipse per Italiam seu Galliam necnon et Germaniam tenebat; quia Deus omnipotens has omnes sedes in potestatem ejus concessit, ideo justum eis esse videbatur ut ipse cum Dei adjutorio, et universo Christiano populo petente, ipsum nomen haberet."—*Lambecio. Muratori, in anno 800.*

Italy, and eventually the establishment of the Western empire under Charlemagne.”²¹ From the part taken by Gregory in that contest, results ensued of which neither he nor any one engaged in the controversy could have dreamed. The defence of the veneration of images led directly to the establishment of a territorial sovereignty in the popes. The donations of Pepin and Charlemagne were the spoils of the defeated iconoclasts. The exarchate of Ravenna might almost be said to have been the reward of the protector of the worship of the saints. We can trace, even to the present generation, effects which followed from the resistance of the pontiffs to the edict which commanded the removal of images from the church.

The Western Empire created or revived in the person of Charlemagne, continued in his family until 887. In that year a diet of Germany formally deposed his great-grandson Charles, known in history as “the Fat,” and the dukes of the five German nations elected one of their own number to be sovereign in his stead.

Italy, like Germany, emancipated itself from the sway of the degenerate descendants of Charles, who reigned for some time longer in France. Unhappily, however, the succession to its throne was the object of a conflict which involved the country in perpetual dissensions. The dukes of Friuli and Spoleto claimed the crown, each on the strength of an alliance with the royal family of Charlemagne. For thirty-six years Berenger, Duke of Friuli, the first elected king, succeeded in maintaining his title against his rival of the house of

²¹ Latin Christianity, book iv. chap. vii. p. 147.

Spoletto, and against other claimants whose pretensions were set up in opposition to his own. It appeared to be acknowledged that the imperial crown of Rome belonged to the successors of Charlemagne in the Italian realm. Berenger was crowned Emperor by the Pope. So were any, even of his competitors, who succeeded in making good a precarious and temporary possession of the throne of Pavia.²² Once more it seemed that a native dynasty might rule ; but the curse of Italy prevailed. Domestic dissensions ended by inviting foreign interference.

The period between the extinction of the Carlovin-gian power and the invitation to Otho to assume the Italian crown, was spent in civil war. In 952 the native dynasty yielded to German power, and Otho, the third of the elected Saxon kings of Germany, added to his Teutonic sovereignty the iron crown of the Lombards and the imperial diadem of the empire of the West. In the interval, ten native princes had occupied by tenures, more or less lasting, the throne of Italy. Five of them had been crowned as emperors of Rome.

The invitation to Otho came from the nobility themselves. Italy was oppressed by evils from which the native dynasty seemed unable to save her. Hugo, Count of Provence, had been elected King of Italy, but his power seemed only capable of oppressing the people whom he could not protect. Cruel to his own subjects, he was feeble against their foes. The fierce inroads of the Hungarians ravaged the provinces of Northern Italy. The Saracens, who had seized on the island of Sicily, plundered the south and the west.

²² See the list of emperors at the end of Chapter V.

Lombardy was torn by civil dissensions between rival claimants for the throne. Berenger, the grandson and namesake of the emperor, with difficulty escaped from the power of the tyrant, and presenting himself at the court of Otho, invoked his aid. The nation soon joined him in seeking protection against the ravages that were laying waste their country. Otho passed into Italy with an army and deposed Hugo ; assuming the supreme sovereignty, he permitted Berenger to hold from him the kingdom as a fief ; ten years afterwards he returned, at the earnest solicitations both of the people and the Pope ; deposing his vassal for oppressions that had been made the subject of complaint, he assumed himself the government of the Lombard kingdom, and not long afterwards received at Rome the imperial crown. His descendants who succeeded him in the German sovereignty were without opposition acknowledged as kings of Italy and emperors of the West.

These Saxon emperors ruled Italy with a strong hand. Otho convened a council at Rome which deposed the very pope who had placed the crown upon the emperor's head. Attempts to excite insurrection in the imperial city were punished with merciless severity, and both Rome and the pontiffs were made to feel that in the emperor they had found really a master, and not one to exercise mere nominal control.

It has been said that Otho the Great was the sovereign who obtained or recovered for the kingdom of Germany the imperial crown ; it was not, however, until seventy years afterwards that the dependence of Italy upon Germany was established. The lords of

Lombardy had elected Otho to be their king. No change was made in the laws of the realm under which hereditary succession was usual, but election by the people, or by the nobility in the name of the people, was a right. Upon each succession the form of election was observed. The election of the Saxon chiefs to the throne of Italy and the empire was made by the Italian people and those of Rome ; there was no obligation upon either again to follow the German choice. Upon the death of the last of the Saxon emperors without issue (A.D. 1002) a diet of Lombardy conferred the crown upon Audoin, Marquis of Ivrea. But the jealousies of the feudal lords and of the cities had already formed a strong German party among a people who had learned the fatal precedent of settling their disputes by foreign intervention. Two years afterwards a rival diet was held at Roncaglia, under the presidency of the Archbishop of Milan, and at his instance, this diet elected Henry, Duke of Bavaria, whom the Germans had chosen as their chief. Audoin maintained his authority for some time, but finally retired into a monastery, and in 1014 Henry received coronation from the Pope.

Four times had the Lombards thus elected the King of Germany to their throne, and four times had the object of their choice been acknowledged as Emperor of the West. Although in each instance this had been accomplished by the election of the Italians themselves, the precedents were held sufficient to establish a right. On the death of Henry (A.D. 1024), the national party vainly endeavoured to place a native prince upon the throne. The Archbishop of Milan, accompanied by some

lay lords, without waiting for a diet, proceeded to Germany to offer the kingdom of Italy to Conrad, Duke of Franconia, the newly elected German king. The archbishop and his companions did not profess to come with any invitation in the name of the Italian people. They pressed him to assume the crown as his right. He did so, accepting it as an appendage to his German sovereignty, and without any attempt at an election in Italy, he was crowned both at Monza and at Rome.

Thus was established the right of the electors of the German confederation to nominate the Italian king ; or to speak more accurately, thus was the crown of Italy made dependent on that of Germany. With Conrad, and not with Otho, the subjugation of Italy begins. It has been said that the terms of this strange submission were embodied in some formal document or ordinance, every record of which has been long since lost. From that period it became one of the unquestioned maxims of public law, that the mere election of the German diet conferred in itself the title to the Italian as well as to the German crown.

The impulse of the mind is at first to visit with unqualified condemnation the churchman and his followers, who interposed to destroy once more the hope of a native dynasty, and to subject their country to that which was now in all respects a foreign yoke. In the view of enlightened patriotism nothing can justify the appeal to foreign domination, always sure in the end to inflict evils worse than any domestic inconveniences which it is invoked to escape. But there is strong reason to

suspect, that could we know the whole history of the transaction, we would find that it originated in a struggle between the spirit of municipal freedom and feudal power—a struggle in which the Church, as usual, sided with the people. Possibly there was mingled with this something of the old animosity of race, and the Roman prelate may have invited, as Pope Gregory did of old, the presence of the foreigner, to prevent the crown from settling on the head of a Lombard.

One of the earliest acts of Conrad was to hold an assembly at Roncaglia, and promulgate a constitution which long formed the basis of Italian feudal law. Its provisions abridged the powers of the great territorial lords, and extended, in some degree at least, popular privilege, by rendering secure and independent the tenures of their inferior feudatories.

From the days of Conrad the crown of Italy became “appendant of right” upon that of Germany. In the loss of all traces of the record of the transactions, it is not easy to tell upon what claims of right this pretension rested, but it was probably referred to the supposed succession of the German emperor to Charlemagne. All rights that belonged to the crowns of Germany and Italy, were vested in the elect emperor immediately on his election by the German body ; but it was established as a maxim of law, that he was not to assume the title of emperor of the Holy Roman Empire until he received coronation at the hands of the Pope. In the interval that elapsed between their election and this ceremony, the German sovereigns were at first styled Kings of Italy. In later times the middle term

of King of the Romans was employed.²³ This etiquette was strictly observed, until the haughty pretensions of the Pontiff obliged the Germanic diet to declare that the right of the emperor to exercise the power and assume the name was complete by their own election. In later times the ceremony of Papal coronation was altogether given up.²⁴

Such is the history of the establishment in Italy of that German power which, it has been already observed, perpetuated the name, and in some degree the authority of the emperors of Rome. To the period when that dignity was first conferred on Charlemagne, the imperial city had acknowledged the rule of the Cæsars, and the election or appointment of the great chieftain was only a return to the separation between the Eastern and Western divisions of the empire, which had previously existed for many years. The title of Charlemagne to the empire was as legally valid as that of most of his predecessors from the days of Augustus down, and by his imperial "brother" at Constantinople, he was recognised as legitimate Emperor of the West—a recognition which was afterwards scornfully refused to the German kings who claimed to be his successors in that dignity.

²³ King of the Romans was at one period used to designate the person elected in the lifetime of the emperor as his successor. Among the ancient emperors Cæsar had been similarly used.

²⁴ In 1377, in a "comitia" of the German empire, a decree was promulgated under Louis IV., by which the person elected was declared entitled both to exercise the power and bear the name of Emperor, without coronation by the Pope.—*Goldast's Constitutiones Imperiales*.

It does not appear that any one so assumed the title before Ferdinand I. In the days of his successor, Maximilian II., a second decree upon the subject was enacted.

History, perhaps, records nothing more strange than the long continuance of this imperial dynasty in the German sovereignty to which it was transferred. Say what we will of the unsubstantial nature in latter times of the power that followed the imperial title—and even this power was by no means so unreal as has been supposed—it is impossible that the imagination should not be impressed by the fact, that the dominion of the lords of the Eternal City was represented in the time of men still living ; that in the early days of the nineteenth century there existed a sovereign, who wore by legal right the crown of Constantine, and proved, through an almost uninterrupted chain of succession, his claim to the dignity and title of Augustus.

It belongs to other annals to describe the pomp and splendour which attended the majesty of the prince who was elected to fill the first throne of Christendom. The grand officers of his household were electors of the empire, who held the rank of crowned heads. In the ceremony of his coronation, sovereign princes carried his robes, and waited at his table. In the grand council of his empire sat chieftains who were kings, except in the allegiance which they owed to himself. The monarch of this august sovereignty inaugurated his reign by three distinct ceremonies of coronation. At Frankfort he received the silver crown of Germany ; at Monza or Milan the iron circlet of the Lombards was placed upon his head, and at Rome the Pontiff crowned him with the golden diadem which belonged to the Emperors of the West.

These crowns represented three separate sovereign-



ties. As Emperor, or rather King of Germany, he was the head of the Teutonic confederation, and received the homage of those princes, and they were many, who, though not members of that confederation, acknowledged the feudal lordship of the chief of the German nations. As King of Italy, he exercised the sovereignty which of old belonged to the Lombard monarchs ; while, as Emperor of Rome, he claimed whatever power and authority descended to the successor of the Cæsars.

The empire of Otho, like that of Charlemagne, extended no further south than Rome. The Lombard duchy of Benevento maintained its independence of those who had succeeded to the power of the Lombard kings. The island of Sicily was in the hands of the Saracens, and the five republics of the south in the days of the first Otho preserved their allegiance to the Byzantine Cæsars.

Before long these southern provinces of the Peninsula fell under the dominion of the Norman adventurers, whom they had first invited to protect their coasts against the inroads of the Sicilian Saracens. The Duchy of Benevento, the Greek republics, with the island of Sicily, all became, in the earlier years of the 11th century, the possession of Robert and Roger Guiscard, the bold Norman chiefs. Those cities yielded to them which had never before been subject even to the nominal sway of any master but an Emperor of Rome ; and a kingdom was formed in which the descendants of Guiscard bore sway over the whole of the south.²⁵ This

²⁵ The history of the Norman invasion of these provinces is curious, not the

Norman monarchy owned no feudal superior but the Pope.

less so because it includes the singular origin of the papal claim of feudal right over Naples.

In one of the first years of the 11th century a small band of Norman pilgrims visited Salerno on their way back from their pilgrimage to the Holy Land. During the stay of the pious palmers, the Saracens of Sicily appeared before the town with their usual demand for contribution. The Normans were as brave as they were pious; and placing themselves at the head of the towns-people, drove the haughty invaders to their ships. Gradually pilgrims and emigrants were attracted to settle in the service of the Greeks. A colony was formed in Aversa, and at last a band of three hundred cavaliers who had followed the Catapan of the empire to accomplish a successful expedition into Sicily, but were treated by him with ingratitude, revenged themselves by exciting their associates to conquer Apulia and divide it among themselves (A.D. 1042).

The conduct of the Normans did not accord with the sacred character of the appearance of the first of their numbers. They were guilty of the sacrilege of robbing the shrines of the saints, and plundering monasteries of their possessions. Pope Leo IX., who had been elevated to the papacy while still a layman on the nomination of his relative Henry III., led in person the army that entered Apulia to redress the wrongs of the Church. His generalship was not successful, and the Pope was taken prisoner in a pitched battle in which his troops were utterly routed. The conquerors prostrated themselves before him and implored pardon of all their offences, above all for that of having appeared against him in arms. Struck by their submission their illustrious prisoner granted them absolution, and confirmed this spiritual blessing by the temporal gift of investiture of all the lands which they had conquered or of those which they should afterwards conquer in Southern Italy, on condition that they should hold them as fiefs of the Holy See. The battle of Civitella, in which the Pope was taken prisoner, was fought in 1058. A few years afterwards their chieftain received from the Pope investiture as Duke of Apulia and Calabria, the title under which he ruled his conquests. Robert inscribed on his sword the motto, "Appulus et Calaber, Siculus mihi servit et Afer."

His younger brother Roger, with a mere handful of Normans successfully attempted the conquest of Sicily, and held it under the title of Count as a fief of his brother's duchy. The conquest of Amalfi speedily followed. The date of the subjection of Gaeta is unknown. Naples did not yield until the year 1137, when it surrendered although supported by the republic of Pisa, the Emperor, and the Pope. In the same year the Pisan fleet, while it succoured Naples, razed Amalfi to the ground. Two years afterwards the triumphant Norman chief received from the Pope investiture as King of the Two Sicilies, holding his realm as a fief of the Holy See, by the payment of an annual tribute, which, in later years, became that of the white palfrey laden with six thousand ounces of gold.

Within the limits of the kingdom of Italy, the German sovereigns united in their own persons both royal and imperial rights. In the language of the Germanic jurists this kingdom was spoken of as a peculiar of the emperor, as held, not under the authority of the diet, but as a species of appendage to the imperial crown. The revenues which were paid to the emperor formed a portion of the resources that replenished his privy purse. These revenues principally consisted in customary subsidies from the cities, and the feudal payments which usage had established from the holders of inferior tenures to the supreme feudal lord. The real nature of the supremacy exercised by these monarchs may best be understood by the fact that they had no representative of their sovereignty in their absence; their own visits were rare. In such a state of things it may well be believed that the royal and imperial prerogatives were not very clearly established, or very distinctly defined. In the great contest which finally determined them, Frederick Barbarossa found eminent jurists, and even a national council, to concede to the emperors almost all the attributes of absolute power. But in its ordinary exercise it would appear that this power was scarcely felt. They generally visited Italy to receive coronation, and to accept the homage of their subjects, and returned to their German possessions, leaving the feudal princes and the cities in undisturbed management of their own affairs. The exercise of sovereignty by the emperors was in their absence confined to its external manifestation—the use of their names in all public acts, and the impress of their effigies on the

coins. They occasionally exercised the power of holding national councils, and inquiring into abuses committed by any of their vassals. Every feudal lord and every free city was bound to send a quota to the national militia when the emperor demanded it. On his visits to Italy each city which was honoured by the imperial presence defrayed all his expenses during his stay.²⁶ The duty of providing lodgings was included in these charges, and by the provident care of the citizens, an imperial palace was built in each principal city ready to accommodate the emperor and his suite. As one of the imperial prerogatives suspended the authority of all inferior jurisdictions during the presence of the emperor, many of the cities obviated this inconvenience by taking care that the site of the palace should be outside the walls.

Of the events of the century which elapsed, from the coronation of Otho in 950 to the election, in 1054, of Henry IV., history gives but little information; but there is no reason to doubt that at this period both the feudal lords and the free cities virtually enjoyed the exercise of sovereign rights. During the eighty years that elapsed from Otho to Conrad the Salic, twelve visits were paid by the emperors to Italy. The observation is true, that government is the first necessity of man; in the absence of the emperors it became, by the mere force of circumstances, vested in those local authorities

²⁶ In the rather uncouth Latinity of the jurists the Emperor's dues upon his visits to Italy were described as, "parata," "foderum," and "mansio-naticum." Parata was the cost of repairing the roads and erecting bridges for his passage; foderum, that of provisions for himself, his retinue, and his guard; mansio-naticum, of their lodging.

which possessed anything like prescriptive, or possessory right. The assemblages of the states held by the emperors upon the plains of Roncaglia, in which laws were promulgated and complaints redressed, interfered but little with the ordinary exercise of power.

Within the kingdom of Italy the emperor exercised the rights of lord paramount over chieftains and municipalities, who administered under him a real and almost independent government of their own.

Rome had never been included in that kingdom, and over that city or its territory he could only claim the authority whatever it might amount to, which had been transferred from the Byzantine emperors to the imperial crown of Charlemagne.

In the meagre annals of the tumultuous and disturbed condition of Rome, it is not easy, nor is it of importance, to fix with precision the exact nature of the control over civil affairs which the emperors exercised. Nominally at least, they were within the imperial city supreme. When the title of Emperor was conferred upon Charlemagne, Pope Leo was appointed Patrician of the exarchate of Ravenna; an office which invested him with civil power, but in avowed subordination to the imperial authority. The forms of the Roman republic still survived. A licentious and powerful aristocracy contended for the mastery of civil affairs at Rome. The vigorous rule of Charlemagne, and of his immediate successors, repressed these disorders, which the ambitions and the contests of great families produced; but with the fall of his dynasty, Rome appears to have become the prey of an anarchy and turbulence, in which it would be

difficult to say that any authority, except that of faction, prevailed.

The real power exercised by the emperors in Rome was the control which they were able to establish over the election of the Pope ; and with the very origin of the German dominion in the person of Otho, began the struggle for this object, which constitutes the first grand contest between Italy and her Teutonic masters.

There are few matters connected with the ancient institutions of the Christian Church deserving of more attention than the unquestioned fact, that bishops in the early ages, were elected by the people.²⁷ Such a mode of election impressed upon the whole of the

²⁷ No subject would better repay a full and an accurate examination. In this incidental notice it is not possible to do more than glance at the considerations which it obviously suggests. It is needless, even were it possible, in these pages to adduce authorities to support a position which no writer denies. Charles Butler, one of the most learned and elegant of modern Roman Catholic writers, thus describes the primitive practice :—

“ In the early ages of the Church bishops were elected at a congregation of the clergy and laity of the diocese. One or more of the neighbouring bishops presided at the elections : the whole congregation elected, the bishops consecrated. If, on some occasions, the bishops did not acquiesce in the choice of the congregation, these were considered as extraordinary cases, in which the general rule was infringed.

“ In the reign of Constantine the Great, rank and wealth began to preponderate ; the negative power of the bishops, from their exclusive right of consecration, and the general influence of the clergy, was more sensibly felt. In process of time the Emperor became lord of the ascendant ; and, by degrees, little attention was paid in the choice of bishops, either to the wishes of the clergy, or to the wishes of the laity.

“ About the 11th century, the laity ceased to take a part in them, so that they were considered to belong wholly to the clergy. In the succeeding centuries they were engrossed by that part of the clergy which was attached to the cathedral church of the diocese, which, from this circumstance, was afterwards called its chapter.”—*Works of Charles Butler*, vol. ii. p. 60.

See “ *Blackstone's Commentaries*,” vol. i. p. 377. The early authorities of canons and councils are collected in a tract published at Frankfort, in 1645, “ *Tractatus de translatione imperii Romani ad Germanos et de electione episcoporum*.”

ecclesiastical economy a character very different from that which many persons associate with the idea of a Church. Nor was the right of the laity to choose their own pastors the mere nominal possession of a suffrage rarely exercised, or employed only to record the decisions of others. The abuses so frequently and so loudly complained of prove the practical reality of the right. Frequent instances occur in the ecclesiastical annals of bishops elected by the multitude, not in exact accordance with the canonical rules. The tumultuous election of Ambrose, a layman and civil magistrate, to the Archbishopric of Milan is familiar to every reader of the history of the times. The future saint was carried by an assemblage, which in modern days would probably be called a mob, from the chair of the prefect to the episcopal throne in the cathedral.²⁸

Charlemagne had solemnly confirmed the popular election of the bishops, prescribed, as his ordinances tell us, by the ancient canons of the Church.²⁹ The exalted rank of the bishop of the Roman see—his primacy over the Church caused no variation in the

²⁸ Ambrose had been appointed prefect in Lombardy by the Emperor Valentinian. Entering the church when the congregation were assembled, a sudden impulse caused them to appoint him to the vacant bishopric. He fled to his tribunal. In vain he protested that he was unfit for the office, being a layman, and having wholly devoted himself to secular pursuits. If the accounts of the old annalists be true, he adopted many strange methods of convincing them of his unfitness. Their answer to all his efforts to prove himself a sinner was, "We will have you for our bishop. The sin be upon us."—*Life and Works of St. Ambrose. Migne's Patrology*, vol. xiv. *Baronius, ad annum 370.*

²⁹ *Sacrorum Canonum non ignari, ut in Dei nomine sanctæ ecclesiæ suo liberius potiretur honore, ad sensum ordini ecclesiastico prebuimus — ut scilicet episcopi per electionem cleri et populi secundum statuta canonum de propria diocæsi eligantur.*—*Capitula Car. Mag. Ann. 803.*

mode of the election by which he was raised to his high office. The Bishop of Rome was chosen by the Roman clergy and people.³⁰

Over these elections the emperor exercised, from the days of Constantine, a superintending control. The appointment of the Roman bishop was confirmed even to the last by the exarchs of Ravenna. In the new created empire the same prerogative was preserved. Imperial legates presided at the election. By the authority of the emperor irregular elections could be set aside, and the Pontiff elect only entered on his office when he had received imperial approbation.

It had been said by German writers that Charlemagne acquired the absolute right of nomination of the pope. The facts of history contradict the assertion. The recommendation of the emperor would have been probably in some instances influential in directing the

³⁰ Charles Butler thus describes the ancient mode of electing the bishop of Rome :—

“The election of the Bishop of Rome was conducted in the same manner as that of other bishops ; but on account of the superior importance of the see, attracted more of the attention of the emperors than the election of any other bishop.

“On the division of the empire between the sons of Theodosius I., all that concerned the Bishop of Rome devolved to the Emperor of the West. After Justinian recovered Rome from the Vandals, it fell to the Greek emperor ; and on account of his distance from Rome, his rights on these occasions were exercised in his name—first, by the Proconsul of Italy, and afterwards by the Exarch of Ravenna. On the restoration of the Roman Empire of the West in the person of Charlemagne, they devolved on him ; and thus in his time the Roman pontiffs were raised to that dignity by the suffrages of the sacerdotal order, accompanied with the voice of the people ; but after their election, the approbation of the emperor was necessary to their consecration. Less attention was shown to the authority of the emperor in the reigns of the successors of Charlemagne ; and at length it seems to have been wholly disregarded ; but it was regained by Otho the Great, and uninterruptedly and exclusively enjoyed by him and his successors, at least till the time of Gregory VII.”—*Charles Butler's Works*, vol. ii. p. 63.

choice of the electors. But over the election itself, neither Charlemagne nor his descendants appear to have exercised any more than a superintending control.

With the fall of his family that control ceased. The succeeding annals of pontifical elections exhibit, even in the imperfect records that have come down to us, scandals which almost exceed belief. Two unscrupulous factions of the aristocracy contended for the mastery of Rome. The annexation of the exarchate of Ravenna had elevated, or at least converted, the Pontiff into a great feudal potentate, lord of rich territories, to whom counts and marquises did homage for their castles and domains. His high office became a prize that was eagerly sought by the ambitious and the profligate. The right of election was usurped by one or other of the great families whose retainers could succeed for the time in securing by violence possession of the city. Popular election in the proper sense there was none. All liberty at Rome was trampled down by violent factions who no longer respected even its forms.

When we read the stories that have been transmitted to us of this period, our first impulse is to suppose, or at least hope, that allowance may be made for the possible or probable exaggerations of writers in the interest of the emperors, who were not indisposed to magnify the evils of popular election, some, perhaps, for that tendency which appears natural to men in all ages, to make the most of any irregularities in the ministers of religion. Unhappily accounts, from which no such deductions can be made, relate indisputable facts of riot and disorder sufficient to disgrace the

appointment to the most secular office, shocking when occurring in connection with the sacred ministrations of the Church. The nominations of the pontiffs were carried by violence and blood. The successful candidate ran the risk of losing his life in the collision which almost certainly ensued. Escaping this danger he still held his sovereignty by a precarious tenure until the fortunes of his opponents were strong enough to drive him from the city, and substitute one of their own partisans in his room. Influences of a still worse and more profligate character determined the elections, which were virtually governed by the dissolute nobility of Rome. Theodora, a woman of noble rank, but who rivals in the annals of Christian Rome the infamy which those of the pagan city attribute to Messalina, acquired influence enough to dispose of the tiara at her pleasure. Her daughters Theodora and Marozia inherited her vices and her power, and an appointment to the chair of St. Peter was more than once bestowed as the reward, or even the purchase, of a favourite paramour.³¹ Laymen of notorious character were elevated to the Papal throne ; and at last decency was so far forgotten

³¹ Those who wish for a more detailed account of the almost indescribable and certainly untranslatable scandals of this wretched period, may consult their records, under the veil of a learned language, in the annals of Cardinal Baronius. This eminent ecclesiastic has adopted as truthful the narrative of contemporaneous churchmen, in which even Protestant writers suspect exaggeration. See Milman's "Latin Christianity," vol. vii. chap. vii. p. 328.

The deeper the degradation to which the Holy See had fallen, the more clearly ought we to see, writes Baronius, the hand of Providence in its restoration. His language rises to the eloquence of indignation in describing the enormities of these times. The Saviour slept while the winds and the storm seemed to every human eye to overwhelm the vessel of the Church. "*Dormiebat tum plane alto, ut apparet, sopore Christus in navi, cum hisce flantibus validis ventis navis ipsa fluctibus operiretur. Dormiebat inquam qui*

that when the death of the pontiff occurred too soon for the grandson of Theodosia, who was intended as his successor, all canonical rules were violated in favour of the youthful aspirant—and the chair of St. Peter was filled by a boy who had scarcely reached the age of eighteen years. The degradation of the Papal chair was now complete. It was at this very moment that circumstances occurred which invited the German sovereigns to Italy to rescue Rome from evils which seemed to threaten at least in the capital of Christendom, religion itself.

Under the title of John XII., this boy pontiff was reigning at the time of the accession of Otho the Great. He was one of those who joined in inviting that emperor to Italy, and from his hands Otho received the imperial crown.³² The profligate pontiff was uncon-

ista non videre dissimulans sineret sic fieri dum non exsurgeret vindex.—*Baronius ad an. 912.*

Those anxious for details must refer to the original itself. One passage of general description must suffice for quotation.

“*Quæ tunc facies sanctæ ecclesiæ Romanæ? Quam foedissima? quum Romæ dominarentur potentissimæ atque sordidissimæ meretrices? quarum arbitrio mutarentur sedes, darentur episcopi, et quod auditu horrendum et infandum est, intruderentur in sedem Petri earum amasii, pseudopontifices, qui non sint, nisi ad consignanda tanta tempora, in catalogo Romanorum pontificum scripti.*”

The deepest degradation of the pontifical office he records is when he tells us that Theodora, impatient of the absence of her lover at Ravenna, appointed him to the popedom to bring him nearer to herself. “*Theodosia ne amasii, ducentorum milliarum interpositione, quibus Ravenna sequestratur a Româ, rarissimo concubitu potiretur, Ravennatis archiepiscopatum deserere coegit Romanumque pontificatum, proh nefas! usurpare.*” Such are the plain and homely words in which Bishop Luitprand, quoted by the Cardinal, indignantly records this hideous profanation.

The credulity and spitefulness of Luitprand disentitle him to the implicit credit which Cardinal Baronius gives to his accounts.

³² The invitation of John to Otho originated in one of the family feuds which disturbed the peace of the pious dispensers of the patronage of the Holy

sciously consecrating a power which was to be the just instrument of punishment upon himself. His conduct was such as might have been expected from the circumstances of his elevation. He found his scriptural model in the sons of Eli. The most sacred places were polluted by his licentious crimes.³³ The eyes of all were turned to the imperial authority to correct the evils which were disgracing the Church and the country. Otho once more visited Rome, but this time it was to depose the pope. A council was summoned by whom the sentence of deposition was pronounced, and a nominee of the emperor appointed to the vacant see.

Instead of correcting its usages by regulating popular election and curbing the power of the disorderly and licentious nobles who had at once usurped and disgraced the authority of the Roman people, Otho took the opportunity of securing a control over the election of the future pontiffs to himself,³⁴ and a compact was entered into by which it was agreed that no one should be

See. Hugh of Provence, the tyrant against whom the aid of Otho was invoked, had married Theodora. His insolence provoked the deadly enmity of her son, Alperic, the father of Octavian, as John was then called. Octavian was elevated to the Papal throne in opposition to the faction which supported Hugh.

³³ We must again recur to the obscurity of a learned language, and the testimony of Bishop Luitprand, verified by Cardinal Baronius: "Quod si cuncta taceant, Lateranense palatium, sanctorum quondam hospitium, nunc prostibulum meretricum, non silebit amicam conjugem Stephanæ patris concubinæ sororem. Testis omnium gentium, præter Romanorum, absentia mulierum, quæ sanctorum apostolorum limina orandi gratiâ timent visere, quum nonnullas ante dies hunc audierint conjuges, viduas, virgines oppressisse."—*Luitprand*, l. vi. c. 6; *Muratori, Scriptores Italici*, vol. ii.

³⁴ Several writers have asserted that Otho obtained an ordinance by which he is supposed to have been granted "the right that was conferred upon Charlemagne of choosing his successor, and nominating the Pope." The ordinance is in Goldast; but, carefully examined, it does not bear the interpretation put upon it. It only gave the regulation of the elections.

elected to the pontifical chair without the previous consent of the emperor to his nomination.

This was a great change in the Roman institutions, and was not tamely acquiesced in. The violent factions who had contended for the mastery were indignant at being deprived of their spoil, and other and less discreditable feelings contributed to the opposition. The ordinance virtually taking away those privileges which the Roman people had exercised since the days of Constantine, was felt as the complete subjugation of the city of Rome and its church to a foreigner. The elevation of the German who had been appointed by Otho was not calculated to conciliate the Italians. Even John found partisans who forgot his past offences in their zeal for a pontiff of popular and national nomination. They became strong enough to restore him by force, and drive from Rome the imperial nominee; the immediate contest was ended by the sudden death of John, it is said, in a personal brawl in which his profligate habits involved him.³⁵ The struggle between imperial appointment and popular election was continued in scenes of violence through the reigns of Otho and his two successors in the Saxon line.

The Roman annals of the reigns of the Saxon emperors present little more than a succession of rebellions, and the varying fortunes of rival popes. The Saxon line of emperors terminated with Otho III.,

³⁵ There were not wanting those who attributed his death to the direct interposition of Satan, who came at last to carry off his prize.

"Quâdam nocte extra Romam dum se," writes Luitprand, "cujusdam viri uxore oblectaret, in temporibus adeo a diabolo est percussus, ut intra dierum octo spatium eodem sit vulnere mortuus."—L. vi., c. 11.

perhaps, more properly speaking, with Louis of Bavaria the grandson of Otho in 1024. The right of interference conferred upon Otho, was probably regarded as expiring with his descendants, for under the Franconian line of emperors which succeeded, the uncontrolled privilege of popular election appears to have been reassumed. But unhappily with its restoration the old disorders and scandals revived. Venality was added to the corrupt influences that generally prevailed. In the year 1046 when the Emperor Henry III. came to Rome to receive his coronation, he found three rival claimants disputing the possession of the Papal throne. All of them had been guilty of open and unblushing bribery at the election which originated this dispute. The imperial authority summoned a council, which solved the difficulty by deposing all three. A pope (Leo VIII.) was appointed on the presentation of the emperor; and those who had witnessed with grief and indignation the scenes that had once more disgraced the city and the Church, offered no opposition to the ordinance by which the new pontiff conceded to his imperial patron the right of nominating his successors in the Papal chair.

Thus with difficulty and after many struggles were the Roman people deprived of their right of electing the Pontiff, which perhaps some will consider they forfeited by its abuse. Even during the reigns of the Othos, the imperial nomination did not uninterruptedly prevail. In the days of the first of these German sovereigns it was maintained only at the point of the sword and by the repeated exercise of force.

Three times was the first Otho constrained to visit Rome to depose the pope whom on each vacancy the citizens elected, and to force upon the reluctant clergy and people his own nominee. Upon every occasion the rebellion, as it was termed, of the Romans was severely punished. We can judge of the extent and character of the resistance by the fact that upon the last, the revolt was followed by the banishment from the city of all the magistrates of Rome.

In the early portion of the reign of his son and successor, imperial attention was too much occupied with the affairs of Germany to leave to Otho II. much leisure for those of Rome. Two successive popes appear to have been elected without imperial interference. In the absence or the delay of the emperor's nomination, the excuse was an easy and a true one that it was absolutely necessary to provide for the immediate discharge of the duties of the see. In the latter years of his reign we find this emperor visiting Rome upon the usual errand of suppressing a revolt against the Pontiff of imperial choice.

In the days of the third Otho the struggle assumed the form of a contest between imperial power and the constitutional authorities of the city of Rome. When Otho visited Rome in 998, it was to force back his relative (Gregory V.), whom he had nominated to the pontifical chair, and whom the consul, Crescentius, and the citizens had expelled. The city was prepared to resist the imperial troops, and maintain the rival Pope whom they had named. Otho, under pretence of proposing terms of accommodation, invited Crescentius to

his camp. Having inveigled him into his power, he executed him as a rebel, in base violation of his safe conduct. By this act of treachery the emperor succeeded in conquering the resistance of the Roman people. Two years after he died at an early age, supposed to have fallen a victim to the just revenge of the widow of the murdered consul.

With the death of Otho terminated the Saxon line of emperors, which, for three generations, had held the imperial crown. From Henry of Bavaria, his successor, it passed to the house of Franconia, by the election of Conrad the Salic. The son of Conrad was the monarch to whom, in 1046, Rome surrendered the right of nominating the Pope.

Thus, from the very first transfer of the imperial crown to the German sovereigns, in the person of the first Otho, had the contest between prerogative and popular privilege, in the appointment of Roman bishops, been constantly carried on. The resistance to the right of imperial nomination was in one sense a struggle for the independence of the Holy See. But it was not the struggle of churchmen to support ecclesiastical power. It was a battle of the people to preserve those privileges which had descended to them from ancient times. However much the right of popular election had been abused, however much men, in the first impulse of indignation at its scandals, might be disposed to accept of any alternative to escape them, it was impossible to expect the community of Rome to continue in contented acquiescence in the nomination by a foreign potentate, of the bishop and great magistrate, whose

predecessors, from the very first ages of the Christian establishment, had been elected by themselves. The German emperors, whatever influence they may have acquired in the provinces of their kingdom of Lombardy, never succeeded within the walls of Rome in attaching to themselves either loyalty or respect. Compelled to repair to Rome for the purpose of receiving coronation, this visit very frequently resembled more the stealthy entrance of some returning fugitive than the approach of a sovereign to the capital of his dominions. Upon many occasions, when the emperor came attended by his guards, the soldiers were compelled to remain outside the walls while their master entered the gates to undergo a necessary ceremony, and escape as rapidly as possible from a city in which everything around him reminded him that his advent was looked upon as that of a foe. Meagre as is the information supplied by the historic annals that have come down to us of the century between Otho and Henry IV., it affords indications perfectly sufficient to disclose the true character of the principles involved in the contest that then agitated Rome. It was one between national independence and foreign domination—between municipal freedom and monarchical prerogative ; and it is impossible to doubt that the opposition to the imperial claim to nominate the Pontiff, evinced the resistance of Roman patriotism to the subjugation of both the city and the Church to that novel German dynasty, the existence of whose power was felt as imposing the debasing and galling slavery of a foreign yoke.

The records of this struggle can hardly be said to

exist. We cannot tell even the names of many who must have even been once energetic actors in its scenes. The virtues it called into action, the crimes to which it gave rise, have passed into oblivion with the generation that witnessed them, and we know little more than this, that at its close a revolution had been effected more momentous in the history of Christendom than many which have received far more attention from those who record its events.

The establishment of the imperial right to nominate the Pontiff, was the consummation of a revolution already in other places complete. The popular choice of bishops, solemnly guaranteed as it was by Charlemagne, had been abrogated in some places by a clerical usurpation, which excluded the laity and the general body of the clergy, by confining the election to the chapter of the cathedral ; in others by the seizure of the right of nomination by the sovereign. It is not easy to estimate the consequences of the change. Considering the position occupied by bishops in the middle ages, it was an immense revolution in the political as well as the ecclesiastical institutions of Europe. In the latter it accomplished an exclusion of the laity from Church affairs, which altered the whole character of the ecclesiastical arrangements, and constituted a hierarchy and priesthood no longer a portion of the people, but their directors and their lords. The effect upon civil relations was at least as great. With the transfer of the right of nominating the bishop from the whole Christian community to monarchs or to clerical corporations, the sympathies of the Church were gradually

transferred from the masses, and attached to the interests and the prejudices of privilege and rank. The people lost their magistrate and their tribune, and it may not perhaps be too much to say that in the overthrow of that which was really the republicanism of the Christian Church, the cause of popular liberty was deprived of its best protector against the encroachments of monarchical prerogative, and the poor and the humble of their most effectual support against the oppressions of the wealthy and the great.

In Rome, the contest was, as has been observed, between patriotism and foreign dominion : even in its scanty records, we have ample proof of the nature of the elements that were arrayed on the side of Italian independence. In the sentence of one emperor who exiled all the magistrates of Rome, and the treacherous execution of a consul by another, we have sufficient to tell us that on the side opposed to imperial supremacy were actively engaged the powers of the municipality of Rome. From the same acts we learn also that in the darkest period the imperial city maintained at least the form of her ancient constitution, and had her magistracy independent both of emperors and popes.

The religious element scarcely entered into the contest. At no period in Italy, not even in the mournful days of Alexander Borgia, was religious feeling at a lower ebb than at the very time when the first Otho visited Rome. The scenes that disgraced the pontifical elections could never have occurred if public opinion had not been deeply infected with an irreligious taint ; if it had not been so previously, these

scenes must have destroyed all vestige of reverence and respect for sacred functions so profaned. There was not much to conduce to the welfare of religion in the quarrels which attended the elevation of each successive pontiff. Bishops placed on their thrones by the sword, were but ineffective teachers of the religion of the cross. We must not wonder if the earnest and pious, amid the tumults of ecclesiastical seditions, and the distractions of rival popes, began to look for the time when emancipated from worldly control the Church might fulfil her divine mission of teaching mankind the things that belonged to their eternal peace.

The great struggle which ensued between the Papal and Imperial power, will not be understood or appreciated without remembering the elements engaged, and the principles involved in that which preceded, for the right of nominating the Pope.

CHAPTER III.

The War of Investitures—Hildebrand—Death of Henry III.—Accession of Henry IV.—Effects of the War of Investitures—Prevalence of Simony in the Church—Third Council of Lateran—Election of Pope vested in the Cardinals—That of Bishops in the Chapters—Decree of Pope Nicholas against Lay Investitures—Question of Investitures started—Feelings engaged on both sides—Election of Hildebrand to the Papal Throne—Great contest for supremacy between Papal and Imperial power—Reflections—Summons to the Emperor to appear at Rome—Henry convenes the German prelates at Worms—They pass a resolution deposing the Pope—Henry's letter to Hildebrand—The Pope and his Council excommunicate Henry—German princes assemble at Tribur—Henry obliged to ask reconciliation with the Pope—Pope at Canosa—Humiliation of the Emperor—Strange scene at the Sacrament—Revulsion of feeling in favour of Henry—Rebellion of Rudolph—Rudolph supported by the Pope—Second excommunication of Henry—Deposition of the Pope by the German and Lombard prelates—Guibert, Archbishop of Milan, appointed Pope—Henry invades and takes Rome—Enthronement of the anti-Pope—Coronation of Henry—Gregory besieged in the Castle of St. Angelo—Relieved by Roger Guiscard—Henry compelled to retire—The troops of Guiscard pillage Rome—Flight of the Pope—His death—Condemnation of the contest—Rebellion of his sons against Henry—His death—Henry V.—His treatment of the Pope—Renewal of the Contest—Concordat of Worms—End of the War of Investitures.

WE have traced in the preceding chapter the progress of that struggle between imperial power and popular privilege, in which successive emperors exerted all their influence to wrest from the Roman citizens the mastery of the Roman See. Under Henry III. this object seemed to be at last accomplished, and to the proud prerogatives which had so strangely devolved upon the monarchs of the Germanic confederation, was

added the highest of them all, that of nominating the spiritual chief of the Christian world. With the exception of a wild effort on the part of the most disreputable of the three rival popes whom Henry had deposed, to resume the authority he had justly forfeited, no attempt was made to dispute the regulation which referred the choice of the Pontiff to the emperor. Four times in the short space of ten years was Henry called on to exercise this power, and upon each occasion his appointment was quietly accepted.

The most zealous adherents of ancient right were reconciled to the imperial presentations by the form of an election, in which the clergy and some of the citizens of Rome accepted as their bishop the sovereign's nominee.¹

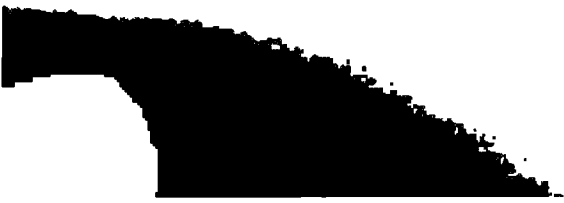
This regulation was not in terms an alteration of the ancient canonical rule. Nominally, the pontiff was still chosen by the clergy and people, subject to that imperial control and confirmation which the edicts of former times enjoined. The absolute nomination was effected by a rule which obliged the electors to choose the Pontiff of the emperor's recommendation. Already the power and the pretensions of the Papal See were great enough to invest the right of appointing the Pontiff with a grandeur that placed it far above all the ordinary prerogatives of kings. When he had established upon apparently firm grounds that right, Henry might

¹ Bruno, one of the pontiffs recommended in the imperial *cong  d' lire* did not so easily satisfy his conscience. Arrived at Rome, he assembled the chiefs of the clergy, and, with tears in his eyes, refused to be elected on the imperial letters. He implored of the electors to exercise their franchise. Bruno was elected, and he accepted the dignity with a clear conscience.

well believe that he had settled imperial authority upon a sure basis. Vain, however, were all the calculations of human foresight against the inexorable progress of events. This very submission of the Papacy, complete as it appeared to be, prepared the way for a contest in which pretensions were put forward higher than had yet been asserted by any of the former occupants of the Papal chair : a contest in which Henry's own son was compelled to humble himself before a haughty and relentless pope, and which terminated only with the virtual overthrow of the imperial power.

Henry died in 1056, at the comparatively early age of forty. His virtues and his abilities had given him such influence with the Germanic electors, that he had already obtained the appointment of his infant son and namesake as his successor. Henry IV. was but six years old when his father's death placed upon his brow the imperial crown. It is the highest testimony to the authority of his father's name to find the princes of Germany, inconsistently, indeed, with all the principles of their constitution, acknowledging the sovereignty of a boy—the only time in the history of the confederation in which the sceptre of Otho was swayed by a minor's hands.


The long reign of the fourth Henry was almost wholly occupied in that contest with the Papal power, to which history has given the name of the War of Investitures : a contest in which, before its close, principles were asserted, and pretensions put forward, that wandered far from the cause of the original dispute. That contest was nominally terminated in 1122, but it



bequeathed elements of discord which long survived. It was followed at no long interval of time by the attempt of the emperor Frederick Barbarossa to destroy the privileges of those free cities which had learned resistance to imperial authority in its contests with the Pope. The factions of Guelph and Ghibeline perpetuated the distractions of these conflicts, and in the person of the second Frederick involved once more the empire in a deadly struggle with the Papal See. With the accession of Henry IV. commenced a period during which for two centuries the German monarchy was engaged in an almost unintermitting struggle with municipal freedom, with the power of the Papacy, or with both—a contest which ended only with the death of the second Frederick in 1250 : if, indeed, it could be said to have closed thirty years afterwards, when Charles of Anjou was invited to Italy to execute the sentence of the Church upon the heirs of the imperial house of Hohenstauffen, or even at a later period still, when the last representative of these princes expiated on the scaffold the crime of asserting against a usurper his hereditary rights.

Within that period will be found the events which have exercised upon the fortunes of Italy the deepest and the most permanent influence. The Papal See asserted its loftiest pretensions, and put forward its highest claims to universal power ; the long contest between civil and ecclesiastical supremacy agitated Italy and Germany for years. The free cities of Lombardy formed that illustrious league which vindicated their liberties against all the efforts of imperial might. In

that interval the glory of the Italian republics reached its highest splendour. Within the same period rose the factions which, under those outlandish names of Guelph and Ghibeline, after convulsing Germany, tore asunder the communities of Italy with the fiercest discord of intestine strife. In the madness and the passions of that strife perished the greatness and the freedom of the proud Italian states. In the crimes which were prompted by the evil spirit of its dissensions were taught those lessons of violence and treachery which familiarised men to deeds of perfidy and blood. Terribly were they put in practice in the usurpation of the tyrants whose acts made the annals of many an Italian state but the gloomy record of the crimes by which power was won, and the enormities by which it was abused. As if to complete the whole cycle of Italy's misfortunes, within the same period a French chieftain was invited to seize by force the possessions of the princely family who had fallen under the ban of the Church. In the conquest of Naples by the armies of the Duke of Anjou was laid the foundation of an interference which centuries after desolated Italy with blood. Far beyond the confines of Italy extended in after ages the influence of these memorable contests—contests, which in their progress occupied the mind and excited the feelings of those countries which were then the centre of the intelligence of the world. A philosopher, not much disposed to exaggerate the effects of anything connected with Christianity, has left us his opinions of the vastness and the extent of the consequences they produced. In the struggles between the



Papal and Imperial power, Voltaire saw the clue to all the labyrinths of modern history, and the germs of all the revolutions which up to his day had taken place.

Very different from effects like these were the views and prospects of those who commenced the movement against the abuses of lay patronage which, in its remote consequences, led to such results. Unjust indeed it would be to deny to the originators of that movement the merit of an earnest and sincere desire to reform the crying evils which afflicted religion and disgraced the Church.

With the memorable "war of investitures" the energy and genius of Hildebrand have imperishably associated his name. Canonised by the Roman Church in her calendar of saints, viewed by many even of Protestant writers as the rescuer of the Church from evils which threatened to extinguish Christianity itself; he has been regarded by others as the very evil genius of ecclesiastical tyranny; he has been described as the contriver of a deep-laid plan to establish over all nations and potentates the despotism of the Papal power; and, in the minds of many, there rises with the very mention of his name the image of a proud and domineering priest, who trampled on the neck of kings, and compelled emperors, barefooted and clothed with sackcloth, to do penance at his feet.²

Born in a humble rank of life, this remarkable man was indebted for his education almost to the charity of

* The materials of the history of the times of Hildebrand are abundant. A large number of his letters are preserved in the 148th volume of Migne's "Patristic Theology." Full and varied information is contained in the documents relating to him published in the same volume. The writings of his

the Church. Brought up under the auspices of a relative who was the abbot of a convent at Rome, in his very boyhood he turned himself from choice to habits of asceticism and self-denial. At Cluni, in Burgundy, he embraced the monastic life, and assumed the character and habits of a monk. During his studies in that monastery he acquired the highest reputation, not more for his learning and ability than for his devotion. Without being admitted to clerical orders, he left the walls of the monastery as a preacher. In this latter capacity he attracted the attention of the emperor, Henry III., who, impressed by the eloquence and piety of his sermons, sought his acquaintance, and, up to the latest hour of his life, was influenced by his advice.

From the retreat of his convent, to which the voice of his brethren had recalled him as their prior, Hildebrand accompanied to Rome the Bishop Bruno, whom, in the year 1048, the emperor, in exercise of his right of nomination, elevated to the Papal chair. From this period Hildebrand was the real director of the movements of the Papal See. The new pontiff, under the title of Leo IX., administered the affairs of the Papacy under his influence and advice. Upon the death of Leo in 1054, the emperor nominated his successor on the recommendation of the influential monk. Yet, while occupying this position, and acting upon several occasions as legate to the Pope, Hildebrand continued still

friend and associate, Peter Damiani (Migne's "Patrology," vol. cxliv.-cxlv.), supply us with much curious information. The proclamations and letters of Henry, and the decrees of the German and Italian bishops will be found at length in Goldast. Among modern writers, Milman's "Latin Christianity," and Bowden's "Life of Gregory VII.," are perhaps the most complete.

a layman. The minor order of deacon he received several years afterwards to qualify him to fill the Arch-deaconry of Rome. It was after his election as Pontiff that he was ordained a priest.

The abuses which existed at Rome when the third Henry appeared before its walls, were not confined to the City of the Pontiffs. The corruption of the Church was widely spread, and required stern and vigorous measures for its correction. Ecclesiastical preferments were commonly made the subject of sale, not merely by lay patrons, but by the bishops. Bishops themselves owed frequently their elevation to venal votes. In such a condition of the Church it may well be supposed that the inferior clergy too generally represented the laxity of their superiors. The Emperor Henry appeared to have been guided by a sincere desire to restore the purity and efficiency of the Church. The pontiffs whom he nominated were chosen with some regard to their character and fitness. The emperor, in his capacity of sovereign, set himself earnestly and laboriously to the task of correcting clerical delinquencies, and the appeals or rather admonitions which he addressed to the bishops imploring them to aid him in this grand work of reformation, breathe the sentiments of piety which become a Christian king.³

It was against the practice of the sale of ecclesiastical benefices, that the chief exertions both of Henry and the pontiffs whom he appointed were directed. The severest laws were passed against a practice, which has been in all ages denounced as the sin of Simon Magus,

³ Goldast, "*Acta et Monumenta Regum.*"

in that common nomenclature of churchmen, who were not unwilling to place the possession of an ecclesiastical benefice upon a level with the miraculous gifts of the early ages of the Church. The strictest inquiries were instituted by means of Provincial Synods and of Papal Commissions into the existence of this offence ; bishops who confessed their guilt or were convicted of it, were obliged to resign or were deposed ; and even in the period that intervened before the death of the emperor, a revolution had been effected, which in the restoration of clerical discipline and the reformation of clerical manners, went far to restore the Church to the respect and influence it had lost.

Such was the position of ecclesiastical affairs when the death of the emperor left the authority of his crown to be administered by the Empress Agnes, his widow, during the minority of her infant son. This unprecedented circumstance, which caused the actual vacancy of the empire, occurred at the very time when that vacancy was calculated to produce the most decisive effect on the relations between the imperial crown and the Church. When the very year after the death of Henry a vacancy occurred by the unexpected death of the Pontiff, Victor II., there was no emperor to exercise the privilege which had been conferred, and not more than five days after the death of Victor, the Roman Church elected his successor. Another year had scarcely passed, when the Papal throne again became vacant. An attempt of the nobles of the rural districts to force a pope upon Rome was resisted by the authority exercised in the name of the youthful king, and Nicholas II.

was elected, with the sanction of Agnes and with all the forms of canonical election, to the dignity which his opponent formally renounced.

In the brief reign of Nicholas, a council assembled at the Lateran on the 13th of April, 1059. One thousand and thirteen prelates obeyed the summons of the Pope. Under the guidance of Hildebrand, this council passed a decree which vested the election of all future pontiffs in the cardinals or Roman clergy, subject to the sanction of the emperor and the consent of the people.⁴ Before long even the formal assent of the laity was dispensed with.

Hildebrand was unquestionably the framer of this decree. Already he was master of the movements of the Romans. His friend, Peter Damiani, jealous of his power, satirised it in lines, in which he expressed in verse what was in plain prose the common sarcasm of Rome :—

“ Rite colo papam, sed te prostratus adoro,
Tu facis hunc dominum, te facit ille deum.”

Hildebrand the Pope-maker was greater than the Pope.

His first establishment of the Papal law against investitures has been referred, by some writers, to the same period. Baronius expressly tells us that it was carried by Hildebrand in the first council or synod held under his own Papal rule.⁵ He made a show of reviving in its provisions an ancient constitution of

⁴ See the observations on pontifical elections at the end of Chap. V. vol. ii

⁵ Baronius, vol. xiii., p. 161 ; Dictionary of Councils, Migne. For the other statement, see Perceval's "Italy," vol. i., p. 78.

Adrian. Under the guidance if not under the pontificate of Hildebrand, was also enacted the decree which commanded the elections of bishops to be made by the chapters. All these decrees were the work of the same master mind; so was that which enforced the celibacy of the clergy. They have been represented as forming one deep plan on the part of their framer, to lay the foundation of a priestly rule over all orders of men. It is not, however, by plans of human contrivance that institutions which influence the destinies of mankind are formed. The grandest schemes of human ambition generally perish in their conception. In the plans by which the great designs of Providence are carried out, the men who appear to be the most active agents in their completion, are but unconscious instruments—working out events which they have no power to control.

In the fierce contest which followed the movements of the zealous monk, attention has been principally directed to the law against investiture, but of far deeper importance and far more lasting consequence was that which accomplished the great revolution of the exclusion of the whole body of the Christian people from that voice in the election of bishops which from the Apostolic age had been their right. In Rome alone was even the semblance of that right preserved, and even there the reservation of the approval of the people, as necessary to confirm the choice of the cardinals, was too vague to produce any practical result. The choice of the Pontiff was virtually conferred upon a close corporation of ecclesiastics, subject to no real control

except that resulting from the necessity of imperial confirmation. In the case of inferior bishops the usurpation upon popular right was complete and undisguised. Chapters of cathedrals were exclusively entrusted with that power which in preceding ages had belonged to the whole community of the faithful in each church.

Hildebrand was unquestionably devoted to the most rigid rules of ecclesiastical discipline, and imbued with the loftiest notions of the Church's rights. The biographer who said of him that "he was a monk when a boy," described his character in a sentence which possibly both his friends and his enemies would accept. In the austerities of an ascetic life he recognised the highest virtue of Christianity, and, never having forgiven himself a fault, he had but little of that compassionate indulgence for human frailty which forms after all one of the elements of the charities of religion. Educated in a deep devotion to the Roman See, he believed that in upholding its rights was to be found the appointed means of redressing the evils arising from that flood of irreligion which was overwhelming the Church. Whatever he did he did earnestly. In the spirit of that enthusiasm or fanaticism, without which no one has ever accomplished really great things, he believed himself commissioned in dreams and visions to effect the restoration of the purity, and the recovery of the independence of the Church. We must not wonder if, bound himself by the obligations of his monastic vows, and regarding every offence against the canons as a transgression of the divine laws, he sternly enforced upon the clergy those regulations of celibacy

which the canons had already imposed ; nor can we be surprised at the zeal with which he defended the privileges of that Roman See which his earliest associations had taught him to regard as the representative of the authority of the Christian Church.

The decrees which were drawn at his instance excluded the laity from their ancient rights, but these rights had already been usurped. In almost all the dioceses within the imperial rule, the custom had been established of referring upon each vacancy to the emperor, and electing the candidate who was sent back with the crozier and the ring, the form of investiture which authorised the new bishop to enter on the possession of his see. The decree which vested the episcopal nomination in the chapters was directed, not against popular interference, but against royal nomination.

In Rome itself we have seen that the right of popular election had, from the days of Charlemagne, been with difficulty and precariously asserted. The imperial nomination was hardly ever resisted, except at the cost of an insurrection, and the licentious evils of a choice by the tyrant nobility had made the best friends of popular privilege fly for refuge from its intolerable scandals to the system of nomination, in which the free opinion of the Roman public had a fairer chance of a representation, however indirect.

During the reign of the deceased emperor that opinion had really prevailed. Before making his nominations, he had generally taken pains to ascertain the sentiments of the Roman Church. The system had given pontiffs of character and energy to the Church,

and the result had vindicated the wisdom of the regulation which, in the selection of the Pontiff, sought the imperial protection against the venal violence of the great lords who tyrannised in the elections over Rome.

It was not yet a state of things which could be quite satisfactory to any lover of the independence of the city or of Italy. The nomination of the pontiff by a German emperor was, after all, the enslavement of Rome. A sincere churchman might well tremble for the times when imperial profligacy might bring upon the Church worse, because more irreparable scandals than those which popular election had entailed. The believer in the heaven-commissioned authority of that Church, much more he who accepted as an article of his creed the divine institution of the See of Rome, could scarcely regard with satisfaction its complete dependence on an earthly power. On lower grounds, the Roman citizen regretted the loss of a privilege which was associated with the most sacred recollections of Rome. He could not see without discontent the nomination, by a foreign potentate, of the successor of the pontiffs who had in ancient times identified their name with Roman liberty, and whom Rome had tacitly acknowledged, not only as the first citizens, but as the chiefs and protectors of the state.

We may well believe that feelings such as these agitated in his cloister the breast of the monk whose genius and character had made him, even in the days of Nicholas, the director of the movements of the Vatican. With the example of the evils that had attended the old mode of election, none would have ventured to propose

a return to it without some provision to secure that the elections should be really free. In the attempt that had been just made, to carry the nomination of a pontiff by the former influences of violence, there was a warning of the absolute necessity of providing some check upon the dangers that seemed inseparable from popular election ; and vast as was the change in its ultimate result, the expedient seemed a natural one to place the elections under clerical control.

The decree against lay investitures, although framed in the same spirit of clerical exclusiveness, had much to justify it in the circumstances of the times. The evils of venal, or, as it was termed, simoniacal presentation to benefices, had originated in the existence of lay patronage. The right of advowson was regarded as a property, or as a source of revenue, and private men did not hesitate to make money of their appointments to livings, as kings did of the bishoprics of which they disposed. Lay patrons were accustomed to sell their presentations to the highest bidder. The profligate or the incapable purchased with gold admission to the offices of the Church. The subjection of the Church to the profane power of the laity which was degrading her, was symbolised by the ceremony of investiture, in which her bishops and her abbots accepted from the emperor as their feudal lord the emblems of even their spiritual authority by receiving a sceptre, a crozier, and a ring.

It was true that this right of investiture had been expressly sanctioned by repeated decrees, which conceded it to Charlemagne and his successors, in return

for benefits conferred. The advocates of the Papacy reply that it was tolerated in days when lay presentations were purely bestowed—suppressed in times when simony had become so common, that lay investiture was almost the badge of unhallowed sale of the offices of the Church.⁶

The sagacity of Hildebrand availed itself of the odium against simony in his attack upon lay investitures. There was no necessary connection between the sale of the nomination to an ecclesiastical benefice and the form of institution of the nominee, but it was not difficult to identify in the minds of those zealous for the purity of the Church the practice of lay investiture with the simony that attended lay presentations, and the decrees against both were regarded as constituting in reality portions of the legislation directed against the scandals of venal presentations.

The decrees which solemnly excluded the laity from their ancient privilege of interference in episcopal elections, appear to have been overlooked in the attention which was turned to that which assailed the prerogatives of power. Except in Rome, and some of the Lombard cities, but little attention was paid to this transfer to ecclesiastical corporations of the rights which had been hitherto, at least, shared by the people at large. It was the law against lay investitures, attacking the privileges of the great, which excited the fiercest opposition, and was resented as the most daring encroachment upon imperial authority by the ambition of the Church.

⁶ Baronius, ad annum 1077.

Whatever haughty pretensions may have been put forward by the pontiffs in the progress of the contest to which that decree gave rise, or whatever be the merits of the controversy itself, a very little reflection will satisfy us that it is incorrect to describe this celebrated decree as in itself an attempt to subject the temporal to the spiritual power. The decree against investitures asserted nothing more than the independence of the spiritual authority of all temporal control. There were put forward for the Church the very same claims of exclusive jurisdiction over the admission to ecclesiastical benefices, the assertion of which by the synod of the Church of Scotland revived in our own country, and in our own day, that contest between ecclesiastical and civil authority which assumed the name of the War of Investitures in the days of Hildebrand and Henry IV.

In the early ages of Christendom such questions could not arise. The Church had passed many centuries from the Apostolic age before the dignities or the possessions of Christian pastors necessitated any feudal ceremony of investiture to clothe them with the rank or the rights of worldly lords. The title of the bishop was complete by the election of his flock, and the ordination or consecration conferred on him by the proper authorities of the Church. As private individuals endowed churches, and kings gave donations to bishoprics, the founders not unnaturally reserved or assumed the right of presentation to themselves. When the domains attached to the bishoprics and great abbeys were held like other territories by a feudal tenure from the sovereign, investiture became a necessary ceremony in the admission to the

priory or the see. This was performed in the case of a bishop by the delivery of a sceptre, a crozier, and a ring. The grant of investiture was very naturally supposed proper to be performed by the donor from whose gift the lands were held. The emperors had been in the habit of giving investiture to bishops, and thus admitting them to the rights of their sees. But the bishop who received this virtually acknowledged a supremacy over the Church ; there was admitted in a lay authority that right of induction to an ecclesiastical office which zealous churchmen contended should of right belong to an ecclesiastical tribunal alone.

We would have but an imperfect view of the conflict that ensued if we regarded the question of investiture as the real issue involved. This was its popular pretext : it may have been its originating cause. The true question to be decided was the power of the Church or of the Papal See to enforce its ordinances against sovereigns who disobeyed them. It was reserved for Hildebrand upon the Papal throne to assert for its occupant the right of judging the highest potentates of earth,—of summoning kings and emperors before him for transgressions of the Church's law,—of excommunicating the disobedient monarch,—and of pronouncing against him from the tribunal of God's vicegerent the sentence of deposition which not only released his subjects from their allegiance and their oaths, but obliged them on the pain of eternal ruin to withdraw their obedience from the outcast sovereign, loyalty to whom became a crime against their heavenly lord. It was the assertion of these claims, and not the

dispute about the form of investitures, which convulsed Italy with the strifes to which the struggle between the Pope and the Emperor gave rise.

The ordinance of Nicholas would probably not have been enacted, or, if enacted, never have been submitted to, had there been an emperor of full age. Even as it was, when on the death of Nicholas the cardinals elected Alexander II., a council at Basle, with the sanction of Agnes, elected Cadelaus, under the title of Honorius II. The point of legality was too plainly with the Romans. It was not necessary to impeach the imperial right to justify an election made while there was no emperor to present. Damiani, sent as a legate by Hildebrand, convinced even the imperial court. The title of Alexander was acknowledged, and the anti-pope, after a struggle of four years, fled from the castle of St. Angelo, where he had entrenched himself, and troubled Rome no more.

The director of the Papacy at last became Pope. Hildebrand was elevated to the Papal throne about the same period when the youthful emperor attained the age which qualified him for the exercise of his imperial rights. In April, 1073, Alexander died. In the church of the Lateran his obsequies were performed. The coffin in which were enclosed the mortal remains of the deceased pontiff, had just been lowered to its vault. Dim tapers cast a funereal light along the aisles of the church. A mass of human beings thronged every part of the edifice, and the mournful chant of the requiem rose in the voices of the bishops, and priests, and monks, which swelled its intonations.

Hildebrand, as Archdeacon of Rome, was leading the service, when suddenly, as if by simultaneous impulse, confused voices from different parts of the building joined in the murmur, "Hildebrand is Pope." Louder and more universal the murmur became. The Archdeacon rushed to the pulpit, and with an earnestness that does not appear to have been feigned, implored the people to desist. The cry had risen almost to a wild tumultuous shout, in which the clergy joined. The pulpit from which the Archdeacon was forced to descend was occupied by a cardinal, who announced to the people that the clergy were ready to assent to their choice. Cries of "It is the will of St. Peter," interrupted the superfluous panegyric which he was pronouncing on the object of this display of popular feeling. While some of the monks closed the vault over the remains of Alexander, Hildebrand was elected, in the words of the official registers, by the unanimous choice of the cardinal clergy, the deacons, the acolytes and priests, the bishops, monks, and abbots, giving their assent, and vast numbers of the people of both sexes shouting with one acclaim their approval of the choice.⁷ Carried at once to St. Peter's, he was arrayed in the pontifical robes, and enthroned in the chair of the Apostle, and before darkness had entirely covered the city, Hildebrand, under the title of Gregory VII., was Pope.

The constitutions of Nicholas, which Gregory himself

⁷ "Sanctæ ecclesiæ Romanæ Catholicæ cardinales, clerici, acolyti, subdiaconi, diaconi, presbyteri, presentibus venerabilibus episcopis et abbatibus, clericis, et monachis consentientibus, plurimis turbis utriusque sexus et omnis ordinis acclamantibus."—*Act of Election, Baronius. Anno, 1073.*

had framed, required the approbation of the emperor to ratify the proceeding. Although Henry had not been crowned, the new pontiff recognised him as in full possession of his imperial rights. He wrote to Henry, informing him of his election; he excused himself for his enthronement by the statement that it was the act of the people in spite of his own resistance; he declared his readiness to await the imperial pleasure, and addressed the youthful monarch in terms both of affection and respect. There seems no valid reason for doubting the accounts which represent him as adding to this letter remonstrances upon the irregularities which had already disgraced the life of Henry, and a warning that as Pope, it would become the duty of the writer to visit these offences with the censures and the penalties of the Church.

This warning did not prevent Henry confirming his appointment, and Gregory VII. occupied the Papal Chair with all the forms and requisites that could give legal validity to his title.

Almost all the revolutions of history are tame and unimportant beside the mighty contest which ensued—a contest which involved all the principles, and affected all the interests that can most deeply agitate, and most powerfully sway the heart of man. A strange and mournful destiny attended on its steps. Hildebrand, under his Papal title of Gregory VII., and the emperor, Henry IV., were the first and chief actors. To both of them the consequences were personally miserable. The great Pope died an exile from his see. The emperor's long reign of fifty years was, from the hour

of his attaining manhood, one scene of wearing strife. Bowed down in his old age by grief, imprisoned by his son, he died of a broken heart. Even the great powers represented in the contest appeared to share in the mysterious penalty it entailed. For seventy years after its final termination, the imperial authority was not heard of in Italian affairs. To the consequences of the struggle we can clearly trace the long exile of the Popes at Avignon—that period which Papal writers not inaptly designate as the seventy years of the Babylonish captivity. From this directly followed the schism which for fifty years longer distracted the councils of Christendom, and neutralised the influence of the Holy See. Nay more, to the disturbing influences of these causes we can trace the demoralisation of the Popedom itself. The secession to Avignon renewed the vices, with the scandals of ancient times. The records of the Council of Constance, which restored the unity of the Church, are loaded with an indictment against one of the rival Popes, which contain charges of crimes for the perpetration of which a long life would scarcely seem to have afforded time. The healing of the schism did not remove the grave scandals of the Church. Deep indeed must have been the fall of that Church when, seventy years after the restoration, the austere virtue and pure morals of Gregory VII. were replaced by the licentious infamies which have consigned to everlasting shame the memory of the pontificate of Alexander VI.

Imperfectly would we judge of that great struggle, if we did not admit that high and lofty principle,

and deep and honest feelings, may have engaged men as the partisans on either side. The claim of Gregory rested on a few short and simple propositions. The Christian Church it was asserted had the power of visiting with ecclesiastical censure offences against the divine laws—of cutting off from her communion the obstinate and impenitent offender. If this power was conceded over her ordinary members, where was the exemption of the prince from that jurisdiction which if it had any authority at all, represented one that knew no respect of persons? Was the sovereign to come reeking from the public crimes of profligacy or blood, and demand as of right his admission to that communion from which it was the duty of the priest to drive away his far less guilty subject? All claim for the divine institution of the authority of the Church was gone, if those whom men supposed to be entrusted with the awful duty of dispensing holy mysteries had no power to refuse them to the most profligate or the most impious sovereign who might choose to profane them by his presence. But once concede to the Church the same power of excommunicating a sovereign, which it was admitted she might exercise in the case of others, and it must, it was argued, follow of necessity that the sentence would bring with it the same consequences. The man judged unfit for the community of the faithful was scarcely qualified to exercise those functions which the incorporation of religion with the civil polity of Christendom seemed inseparably to annex to the office of a Christian king.

To sustain the loftiest pretensions of Papal power

it was only necessary to add to these propositions the further one, that the Roman was the governing authority in the Christian Church, and that in the last resort the Pontiff was the supreme judge over all estates and conditions of Christian men. Even this was scarcely necessary to sustain the acts of Gregory. He took the precaution of obtaining for them the sanction of those general councils which, from the earliest ages, had been admitted to represent the authority of the Christian Church.

Against these claims thus resting on traditions which moved the most sacred feelings, the partisans of imperial power had their appeal to principles of almost equally sacred authority. From the days when Constantine had bestowed the questionable gift of earthly power upon the Christian Church, ecclesiastics had endeavoured to show their gratitude—perhaps in its double sense of anticipation of future favours, as well as thankfulness for the past—by extolling and magnifying the prerogatives of the imperial station. The Emperor as well as the Pope had been described as a great power in the Christian Church. His right of judging Popes had been frequently exercised with the consent of Christendom. General councils had been held under his direction, in his own presence or that of his representatives, and in reality subject to his control. The consecrated oil which was poured upon his person gave him the sacred character of the Lord's anointed. The divine right of the emperor was as much an article of faith, as that of pontiffs ; and loyalty had its religion, in the eyes of many, more pure and exalted, than that

which prompted an unreasoning deference to the mandates of ecclesiastical power.

As is usual in any great contest, many other considerations mingled with, and disturbed the division of parties upon the real question that was involved. Even political opinions and national feelings had their influence in determining men's course. On the side of Henry were ranged the partisans of monarchy and imperial prerogative; the part of Gregory was taken by many who wished to see that prerogative by any means curtailed. In the cause of the pontiff were enlisted those who, from superstition, dreaded the anathemas of the See of Rome, as well as those who, in a sincere piety, believed that, against an attempt at her subjugation, they were upholding the independence of the Church.

To these influences was added in Italy the element of nationality. The Pope represented the Italian, the Emperor the German authority, and in the struggle for the freedom of the Papacy, there were patriots who recognised an effort at the emancipation from foreign influence of an Italian power.⁸ Others looked only at the question of investitures in connection with the undeniable scandals that attended a venal patronage, and supported those measures, which seemed calcu-

⁸ "There can be no doubt that throughout the whole of these contests the Papal power received a great accession of strength from the national and republican spirit which was ready to support any power against the imperial."
—*Latin Christianity*, vol. ii. p. 161.

Count Joseph le Maistre, the pious and amiable philosopher who long represented the Sardinian government at the Russian court, endeavours, in his work on the "Temporal Power of the Pope," to show that all the struggles of the Papacy against the Empire involved the principle of Italian independence. A controversialist, in reply, might remind him that the Empire was the creation of the Papacy itself.—*Le Maistre's Pope*.

lated to secure the ministrations of religion from corrupting influences. On the side of the Emperor were found many who with an equal anxiety for the Church's purity, desired to keep it free from the dangers of irresponsible ecclesiastical control. They could point to the occasions upon which Rome itself had appealed to imperial power to rescue religion from the intolerable evils of pontifical tyranny and vice. In the same ranks were found the advocates of existing right, the sacredness of which they invoked against the attempt to reverse relations which solemn deeds and compacts of the pontiffs had settled. There too were to be found the enlightened opponents of maxims in which they could not but see the foundation of a system that was to subject all classes of the laity to priestly rule. With the advocates perhaps on both sides were joined that numerous class, who, under any circumstances, or in any cause, would be the partisans of the power that could most immediately advance their own interests.

Whatever may have been the influences which actuated many of those who supported the pretensions of the pontiff, in the lofty language of that pontiff himself there was no paltering with any of the inferior motives which attracted men to his cause. In disdain of all earthly consideration, he boldly took his stand upon the supreme right of the apostolic see, and condescending to conciliate no worldly prejudices, he commanded the obedience of Christians in virtue of the allegiance which they owed to their Creator. Yet in Italy the spirit both of liberty and patriotism did contribute powerfully to sustain the cause of the Pope.

The inordinate character of the Papal pretensions was overlooked in the fact that they were set up against that imperial power of which the municipalities were already growing jealous. The effect of these elements would have been much stronger, if it had not been that in Lombardy, the stronghold of Italian freedom, the other measures of Hildebrand excited great dissatisfaction both among the clergy and laity. From the days of St. Ambrose the Lombard Church had enjoyed a very considerable amount of independence, using its own ritual, and governed by its own synods. The provincial laws of these synods had sanctioned, or at least tolerated, the marriage of priests.⁹ The enforcement of celibacy was unpopular with the clergy, while many of the cities resented the regulation which deprived them of that share in the election of their bishops, which in their case had not yet been reduced to a mere form. This was not all. In Italy itself existed a jealousy of the Papal power which among the clergy in more distant regions was not so strongly felt. The Church of Milan scarcely brooked submission to the Metropolitan of the Imperial city. Ravenna had acquired notoriety by attempts to dispute the supremacy with the See of Rome. In the progress of the contest the imperial cause was supported by a great majority of the Italian prelates.¹⁰

⁹ They cited in support of this the authority of St. Ambrose, and of some of their own most illustrious prelates, "Latin Christianity," vol. iii, book vi. chap. iii. The priests who promulgated the laws against marriage in Milan were roughly handled by the populace. Similar demonstrations took place at Paris.

¹⁰ Milman's "Latin Christianity," vol. iii. p. 189.

In spite of this it was in Italy itself that the pontiff found his most powerful support. The Roman princes who had conquered Southern Italy, became probably from the spirit of opposition to the emperor, the defenders of the Holy See. It was to an Italian woman that Gregory was indebted for the most influential aid. Among those who most energetically supported his cause was Matilda, Countess of Tuscany, a lady of great possessions, and still greater influence. Admitted to the intimate confidence of Gregory, she sustained his resolution by her unflinching courage. Her masculine energy gave vigour to the cause which she was ever ready to support by the resources of her great domains. She well merited in her lifetime the title of "The Amazon of the Church." Dying, she proved the sincerity of her devotion or her fanaticism, by bequeathing all her great possessions to the Holy See.

It is impossible in these pages to follow in detail the incidents which marked the varying fortunes of the contest, the commencement of which within two years of his elevation Hildebrand provoked. In 1075 he succeeded in passing in a council, or rather synod, in Rome, the celebrated decree which forbade any layman to give investiture of an ecclesiastical benefice, or any priest from receiving it at lay hands, and included in one comprehensive anathema and sentence of excommunication all who should presume to contravene its provisions.

This was speedily followed by a summons to the emperor to appear at Rome to answer before the tribunal of the Church for his offences in retaining, as

his ministers, men who had subjected themselves to the sentence of excommunication, and for having himself given investiture, contrary to the Papal decree. The pastoral admonitions of his spiritual father, which accompanied the formal citation by the legates, apprised the youthful emperor that before the same tribunal he might be called on to answer for those immoralities of his private life, of which the Pontiff had heard with equal grief and indignation. The citation informed him, that unless he obeyed by appearing before the Roman tribunal on the 22nd of February, on that day the solemn sentence of excommunication would be pronounced against him.

Henry met this audacious summons by convening a council of the prelates of Germany at Worms, on the 24th of January. Cardinal Hugo, the very man who, on the evening of his election, had pronounced from the pulpit of the Lateran the fulsome panegyric upon the Archdeacon, came forward now as the supposed representative of the Roman clergy to supply grounds of canonical accusation against the Pope. He charged him with having obtained his elevation by bribery and violence, and with the guilt of having devoted himself to necromancy and magic arts. In vain did some of the prelates protest against the condemnation of a pontiff without proof; in vain did they urge that these charges, if true, were matters, not for a provincial synod, but for a general council. They were answered by the argument that the election of such a pontiff was null and void. Pressed, by the more unanswerable argument that their allegiance to the emperor made it incumbent

on them to concur in the decision of the council, they signed with the rest of the assembled prelates a paper, by which they solemnly abjured all obedience to Hildebrand ; and a resolution was unanimously adopted, by which “the false monk and necromancer” was declared to be no longer Pope.

If the language of Gregory’s missive is open to the charge of being arrogant and haughty, the letter in which the emperor communicated to the Pontiff the decision of the German council, can hardly be said to be deficient in those qualities. “Henry, not by usurpation, but by God’s ordinance, King ! to Hildebrand, no longer Pope but the false monk”—enumerating his supposed offences, his simony, his pride, his arrogance, his trampling on the rights of bishops and of laymen, the letter proceeded : “Us too, consecrated of God, amenable to no judge but God, who can be deposed for no crime but absolute apostasy, thou hast ventured to assail, despising the words of that true pope St. Peter, ‘Fear God, honour the king.’ Thou that honourest not the king fearest not God. St. Paul had accursed even an angel from heaven who should preach another Gospel. This curse falls upon thee, who teachest this new doctrine. Thus accursed ! then ; thus condemned by the sentence of all our bishops and our own—down ! down ! Leave the Apostolic throne, which thou hast usurped. Let another take the chair of St. Peter, who preaches, not violence and war, but the sound doctrine of the Holy Apostle. I Henry—by the grace of God—King ! with all the bishops of my realm, say unto thee—down, down ! ”

The third council of Lateran met on the 21st of February, A.D. 1076. One hundred and ten prelates surrounded the pope. The officer of the Pontiff summoned aloud in accordance with the citation, the emperor to appear. The voice of the apparitor a second time repeated the summons, when the messenger of Henry advanced with this haughty and insulting letter, which he delivered as the emperor's answer to the citation. The priest, who presented it, boldly stood in the midst of the assembled fathers, and in the name of the king, his master, commanded them to present themselves before the emperor on the feast of Pentecost, to receive from him a pope and father ; "for this man," he added, as he pointed to the Pontiff, who sat unmoved and imperturbable, amid the tumult that agitated the assembly, "this man is no pope, but a ravening wolf."

Such was the haughty defiance which Henry flung before the Pontiff in the midst of the assembled council. It was met by the sentence of excommunication, by which, with the unanimous consent of the council, in the presence, and it was said, with the acquiescence of his terrified and despairing mother,¹¹ the emperor was separated from the communion of Christian men. "In the name of St. Peter, in the defence of the Church, and by the authority of God Almighty," the Pontiff "interdicted Henry from the whole realm of Germany and Italy, he absolved all Christians from the oaths which they have sworn, or may swear, to him, and forbade all obedience to him as king."

The intemperate missive of Henry fell harmless at

¹¹ The empress had previous to this entered a convent at Rome.

the feet of the Pope. Far different was the effect of the solemn and dignified sentence of Gregory and the council. The terrors of the excommunication seized on his adherents. The prelates began to desert his cause. His subjects made it a pretext for redressing or avenging the grievances which they had endured. The chiefs of Germany conspired against his rule, and assembled in a diet in October, at Tribur, near Darmstadt. Their deliberations lasted some time. Negotiations were opened between them and the emperor, in which Henry offered large concessions in vain. Finally they resolved that unless within a year from his sentence Henry should have been reconciled to the Church, he must forfeit irrevocably his crown ; in the mean time he was to live without the insignia of royal rank, while the Pope was invited to hold a general council at Augsburg finally to settle the affairs of the distracted empire.

Henry had no alternative but either to go to war with the diet or accept the hard conditions they imposed. The alienation of his subjects produced by his own haughty and imperious conduct, was too general and too complete for him to hazard the crown of Germany upon the issue of a civil war. Moved it is said by the entreaties of his mother, he at last determined to seek reconciliation with the Pope. The real strength of the Pontiff lay in the vices and the crimes of Henry himself. The diet at Tribur had carefully enumerated the offences which they alleged against him, and which justified them, wholly irrespective of the excommunication, in deposing him from his kingly power. There

was too manifest truth in the charges. His subjects had but screened themselves behind the Papal authority, to find sanction for a rebellion which his conduct had provoked.

Christmas was at hand, and the year allotted by the resolution of the diet was drawing to its close. The dukes of Carinthia and Bavaria, his enemies, occupied the provinces through which lay his direct route to Italy. His journey could only be performed through Burgundy and the passes of Savoy, commanded by Adelaide, Marchioness of Susa, the mother of the empress. A winter of unusual severity aggravated the difficulties of that journey. Through ice and snow, along paths from which the snow that had just rolled down in the avalanche was cleared, down steep descents where the glassy surface of the frozen slope appeared to offer no resting-place for the foot of the adventurous wayfarer, Henry, accompanied by his queen and his infant son, with difficulty and danger crossed to the Italian plains ; to learn that already was the Pope on his way to Augsburgh to hold that council to which he had been invited by the resolution of the German diet.

Gregory, the guest of the faithful Matilda, was awaiting the return of milder weather to continue his journey to the north. Twelve miles from Reggio, on an eminence rising near the first slope of the Apennines, stood her feudal fortress of Canosa. In this mountain stronghold the Countess Matilda was the entertainer of the Pope. Personages of distinction were assembled to do honour to the presence of Gregory. Some of the Italian followers of Henry had already made

their peace with the Church, but the partisans of the schismatic monarch in Lombardy were still strong. When first the intelligence that Henry had crossed the Alps arrived, it was uncertain whether he came to submit or to make war upon the Pope. A message to the Pontiff soon informed him through Adelaide of Susa, that the humbled emperor was approaching as a suppliant to seek a reconciliation with the Church.

Within the walls, although not under the roof of that mountain fortress, was enacted that memorable scene of royal humiliation which is associated with the character of Hildebrand in the minds of many who are acquainted with him only in the traditions of the degradation to which he subjected the king. The snow lay deep in the highlands round the castle. The wintry winds swept cold and dismal over them on the morning when Henry, attended by a small retinue of followers, reached the gate of Canosa. While his attendants remained outside, the first sovereign of the Christian world passed, in the light garb of a penitent, bare-footed and bare-headed, through the triple walls to the inner courtyard of the castle and awaited there the summons of the haughty pontiff that was to admit him to his presence. All day long he stood in the shelter of the walls, but without covering between him and the sky. A second and a third day passed over his unsheltered head. Cold and hungry he stood "from morn," not "till dewy eve," but to an evening when icicles froze on the fountains of the court in which he stood. His patience could endure no more. The passionate entreaties of the humbled

monarch were conveyed to the Pontiff by the countess and by the Abbot of Cluni, whose intercessions he invoked, and on the fourth day the relenting Gregory permitted him to enter his presence, that he might receive his submission, and admit him to reconciliation with the Church.

What motives influenced the secret thoughts of the haughty churchman in the infliction of this informal and bitter penance can only be conjectured. Those who will attribute to him none of the frailties of human nature, tell us that it was the discharge of a conscientious duty which bound the Pontiff emphatically to mark the triumph of the Church. More earthly emotions may be reasonably supposed to have agitated his mind. But one short year before had the arrogant and libellous missive of Henry insulted him before his assembled prelates. There was one injury which the Pontiff found it hard to forgive. The charge of simony had been publicly made. He whose whole life and soul and energies had been devoted, with an almost fanatic zeal, to destroy the accursed practice, had been accused by the emperor of owing his elevation to the crime he abhorred. How deeply this stung his inmost soul we may gather from the passionate outburst of feeling which, after he had pardoned Henry, not even his engagement in the most solemn service could restrain. The reconciliation was followed by a solemn high mass at which Gregory officiated, in the presence of the emperor and his attendants. In the midst of the celebration of the eucharist the Pontiff paused. As he was about to receive the consecrated elements, he

turned to the emperor, who knelt near the altar, and, after alluding to the charge of simony which Henry had brought against him, and appealing to his whole life in proof of its falsehood, he laid his hand upon the sacramental symbols and prayed that "God's judgment" might that day acquit him if the charges were unjust, might strike him dead if they were true. In presence of the awe-struck congregation he ate the bread and drank from the cup, and stood calm and erect before the altar upon which he placed the chalice. A moment of solemn excitement thrilled every breast. The Pontiff moved slowly from the steps of the altar towards the king—he carried the consecrated wafer in his hand, and as he reached it towards him he asked of him, in solemn and measured words, if he was ready to go through the same ordeal to prove himself innocent of the charges which his princes in their diet had preferred. He turned away from the prostrate monarch, who raised no hand to receive the sacred emblem. There was a grand and stern sublimity in the scene. There was a majestic earnestness in the vehement outgushing, even in the most solemn hour of his triumph, of the anguish that had wounded the Pontiff's inmost soul, at the injustice and the falsehood by which he was assailed.

Whatever excuse may be made for the conduct of Hildebrand in thus humiliating the emperor, it excited feelings which retrieved the fallen fortunes of Henry. There were loud expressions at first of contempt for the abject prostration of the monarch who had submitted to the degradation. These, however,

soon gave way to those of pity for the sovereign, and indignation at the remorseless pride of the Pope. Absolved from the sentence of excommunication, Henry was once more the lawful king. The old instincts of loyalty gathered round him. He refused to submit to the council which the Pontiff was on his way to hold ; in some minor differences as to details he found an excuse for departing from the oath which he had taken to the Pope. Even Gregory was obliged to temporise in the presence of the feeling he had evoked ; and, when the princes of Germany declared Henry, notwithstanding his absolution, to have forfeited his crown, and elected Rudolph in his stead, the Pope at first remained neutral in the contest.

At last the successes that attended the cause of Henry compelled the Pope to interfere. He demanded from the rival claimants for the throne a submission to the arbitration of the Church. Henry refused to comply. His partisans every where gathered strength. " Fear God and honour the king," became the watchword of the party who charged Hildebrand with violating the apostolic precept of the first of the popes. All the suppressed hatred of his austere and haughty rule, which had widely diffused itself through all orders of the clergy, began to find expression. The cities of Lombardy, with whom that rule had never been popular, took up arms in Henry's cause, and when, in March 1080, Gregory resorted to a second deposition by a general council, the anathema of the Church appeared to have lost the terrible power which it formerly possessed.

The Pope still further weakened his authority by the rash prediction which he uttered, that within twelve months the presumptuous rebel against the Church would be deposed or dead, if within that year he did not once more submit. A golden crown was sent to Rudolph, with an inscription stating that it was the gift of Peter.¹² Within that year the chosen of the Pontiff fell on the battle-field. The cause of royalty did not want its stories of judgments from heaven upon the opponents of the king. Rudolph's right hand was severed from his arm by the stroke of a sabre. It was universally believed that he held up the bleeding stump and exclaimed that it was a judgment on him, thus to lose the hand with which he had signed the oath of fidelity to his sovereign. "Where, where," he cried in agony, "are those who said they would absolve me from that oath?" Religious enthusiasm animated the armies of Henry, as completely as it did those of his opponents. St. Peter was on the side of those who did battle for the Lord's anointed in the one camp, as undoubtedly as in the other he was claimed as the champion of the Pope. A religious fervour, that seemed to anticipate the days of England's Puritans gave courage and determination to both. The soldiers of Rudolph went into battle chaunting the eighty-second Psalm. The *Te Deum Laudamus*, and *Kyrie-eleison* rose from the night watches of the imperial camp.

The prelates, meantime, in the imperial interest, had met the second excommunication of their sovereign by a second deposition of the Pope. Nineteen bishops at

¹² *Petra dedit Petro, Petrus diadema Rudolpho.*

Mentz had signed a decree, in which they added to the old accusations of simony and necromancy the new charge of heresy: "as an old disciple of the heretic Berengar he had endangered the Apostolic doctrine of the body and blood of Christ." He was solemnly deposed as "licentious—as the preacher of sacrilegious and incendiary doctrines—as possessed of an evil spirit, and the worshipper of divinations and dreams;"¹³ and finally, unless on hearing of their judgment, he descended from his throne, the assembled bishops charitably condemned the false pontiff to everlasting perdition. The decree of Mentz, composed in this furious language, was confirmed by thirty Italian prelates, who met at Milan, and at this latter council Guibert, Archbishop of Ravenna, was elected pope.

Henry marched an army against Rome. For three years the citizens within their walls defied his power, and remained faithful to their pontiff. Wearied at last by the long continuance of the siege, they implored of Gregory to yield. That bold and undaunted spirit still refused. Not even the offer of Henry to give up Guibert, to acknowledge Hildebrand as pontiff, and accept

¹³ These charges of divination and necromancy had their origin in the habits of Hildebrand. Like many other great men, he was not exempt from the influence of those feelings to which the wise give the name of superstition. His early belief in visions and dreams has been already mentioned. In his later years he was a student of that judicial astrology which was indeed the general faith of the age. His faith in presages and omens was so strong that he scarcely ever entered on a serious enterprise without consulting them. The story is told of the Synod of the Lateran waiting in solemn silence for half an hour while the Pontiff, in the spirit of the old Roman augurs who bore the same title, was anxiously watching the omens which he could find in a broken egg.—*Latin Christianity*, vol. iii. p. 152; see *Neander's History of the Christian Religion*, vol. vii. (English translation) p. 117.

the imperial crown from his hands, could move the resolution, that was as fearless in the days of adversity as it had been haughty in the days of success. The populace rose in favour of Henry, and the Lateran gate was opened to admit him. Gregory took refuge in the Castle of St. Angelo. The anti-Pope, on the 24th of March, Palm Sunday, was consecrated and enthroned in St. Peter's, and on the following Sunday Henry received from his hands coronation with the imperial crown.

For six weeks Hildebrand remained beleaguered in the strong and almost impregnable fortress to which he had fled. At the expiration of that period, Roger Guiscard marched to his aid with an army of 30,000 men. Before the appearance of this force the emperor was compelled to retire. The Norman chief released the Pontiff from his captivity, and brought him in triumph to the palace of the Lateran. The very next day made the Pope a witness of the horrors of the war he had kindled through Europe. The licentious troopers of Guiscard insisted on treating Rome as a city taken by storm. Massacres and plunder and violations spared neither church nor home nor convent; nuns were dragged from their cells, priests murdered in their churches by the allies of the Pope. The citizens rose in arms and were overpowering their assailants; Guiscard gave the fearful order to fire the town; unable to endure these horrors, the Pope escaped from his palace, and left the pontifical city to return no more. Just one year afterwards he died at Salerno. As he sunk into the stupor of death he uttered the words, "I have loved righteousness and hated iniquity, and therefore I die an

exile." His ear had closed on all earthly sounds before the priest who was beside him had time to answer that no place was exile to the father of the Christian world.

Thus died Hildebrand ; thus passed away in scenes of misery and civil war the dreams and ambitions of that proud spirit. Whatever opinion men may form of his character or designs, let us at least remember that no vices stained, and no cruelties disgraced, his life. No edicts of his pontificate authorised persecution for religious opinion. It was a charge against him in his lifetime, it has been made a reproach to him after death, that he tolerated departures from the stern orthodoxy of religious faith.¹⁴ The charge of heresy was founded on the protection he afforded to Berengarius, who would not accept the orthodox version of the dogma of transubstantiation.¹⁵ His religion has been stigmatised as pretence, because in writing to a Mahometan sovereign he stated his trust that they both worshipped one God, although in different ways, and prayed that his correspondent might have everlasting happiness in Abraham's bosom.¹⁶

For eleven years more the fevered life of the emperor was made miserable by the anxieties and tortures of the

¹⁴ Neander, vol. vii. p. 125.

¹⁵ Berenger of Tours had been frequently condemned for his opinions on the real presence both by Popes and Councils. When summoned before the same Lateran council to which Henry was cited, Gregory dismissed him not only uncondemned, but with letters of recommendation.

¹⁶ "Gregory VII. had all the marks of Antichrist about him, and his religion was nothing more than a grimace. He wrote a very complacent letter to a Mahomedan prince, in which he says to him—'You and we adore one and the same God, though in a different manner. I wish you everlasting happiness in Abraham's bosom.'"—*Jortin's Remarks on Ecclesiastical History*, vol. iii. p. 129.

contest in which he was engaged. In Germany the flames of civil war still raged, and Papal influence supported the claims of pretenders to the throne. In Italy rival popes contended for the chair of St. Peter, and the conflict of to-day, in the streets of Rome, had more than once decided the question which of them should say his mass in the Church of the Apostle on the morrow. A miserable evening of his life awaited the unhappy king. Under the influence of hostile priests, his empress publicly brought against him horrible accusations, which, if true, established an insane depravity in him, if untrue, were only to be accounted for by attributing them to the insane hallucinations of his accuser. Enemies rose against him in his own children: his two sons were successively engaged in unnatural rebellion against their sovereign and father. His second son, Henry V., deposed him from the imperial throne, and confined him in a prison. History adds to the guilt of his rebellion, the accusation of denying his captive father the common necessities of life. The emperor escaped from his gaolers, and wandered in Germany in actual want. A wounded spirit soon brought him to the grave. He died at Liege, in 1106,¹⁷ and left to his cruel and almost parricidal son the inheritance of his crown, and strange to say, also, of his quarrel with the Church. That son was as false to the cause of his unnatural alliance as he had been to his filial duties. Presenting

¹⁷ For five years churchmen refused to permit his remains to repose in the Cathedral of Spire—a structure which owed its magnificence chiefly to himself.

himself as emperor at Rome, he claimed from the astonished Pontiff the recognition of his right of investiture. On its being refused, he led his troops to Rome. Entering the city as a conqueror, he devoted it to pillage, and compelled the captive Pope, Pascal II., to confer on him coronation, and at the same time to cede the privilege of investiture which he claimed.¹⁸ Scarcely had the imperial troops left Rome, when one council revoked the privilege, and another excommunicated the sacrilegious prince. The death of the Countess Matilda, and her bequest of all her possessions to the Holy See, originated a new cause of quarrel. Her lands were seized by the emperor, who entered Rome once more in triumph, and nominated a rival Pope. After another war of investitures, which lasted fifteen years, Europe became weary of a contest in which the symbols of Christian jurisdiction had been made the cause of ferocious and sanguinary struggles, and in which all civil, as well as ecclesiastical authority was unsettled. In 1122 a treaty, or concordat, entered into at Worms, ordained, "That for the future the bishops and abbots shall be chosen by the monks and canons, but this election shall be made in presence of the emperor or an ambassador appointed by him for that purpose ; that in the case of a dispute among the electors, the decision shall be left

¹⁸ Attempts had been made to settle the dispute by negotiation which seemed at one time to have been brought to a successful issue. Pascal had actually entered the church for the purpose of performing the ceremony of the emperor's coronation, when he and the emperor disagreed on the terms. The emperor's troops detained the Pope a prisoner in the church. The Roman populace rose in armed insurrection to rescue the Pope.

to the emperor, who is to consult with the bishops on that subject. That the bishop, or abbot elect, shall take an oath of allegiance to the emperor, receive from his hands the regalia, and do homage for them. That the emperor shall no longer confer the regalia by the ceremony of the ring and crozier, which are the ensigns of a spiritual dignity, but by that of the sceptre, as more proper to invest the person elected with the possession of privileges merely temporal."

Thus was settled the question of investitures, and the mode of election of all inferior bishops. Nothing was determined as to that of the highest dignity of the Church. But before long the nomination of the Pope became vested in the body which represented "the Chapter" of Rome; and within forty years from the concordat of Worms, the Roman cardinals became exclusively the prince electors of the Sovereign Pontiff, independent alike of popular influence and of imperial control.¹⁹

Henry died at Utrecht in 1125. His nephew Conrad, Duke of Franconia, made an attempt to seize on the imperial crown. He was crowned at Milan with the iron crown; but neither the German electors nor the Pope recognised his pretensions, and he was compelled to yield it to Lothaire of Saxony—the candidate supported by the Pope.

On the death of Lothaire in 1137, Conrad, although under excommunication, was elected to the German throne. The partisans of the Papal power unsuccessfully opposed to him Henry Guelph of Bavaria, the

¹⁹ See vol. ii. p. 251, note on the election of the Popes.

chief of a great family, illustrious in the annals of the chivalry of Europe. This contest is remarkable, as having given to the partisans of the Pope and the emperor their names of Guelphs and Ghibelines. "Hy Guelph," and "Hy Ghibeline," became the battle-cry of the contending armies. The first obviously the family name, the second derived from the little town of Wibelung in Franconia—the birthplace, or at least the feudal stronghold, of Conrad.²⁰

On the death of Conrad in 1152, the choice of the electors fell on his nephew, Frederick Barbarossa, Duke of Suabia, chief of the house of Hohenstauffen. Under this prince we are to follow the imperial power into another and almost equally desperate struggle with the spirit of Italian municipal freedom. Hardly was Frederick Barbarossa seated on the imperial throne when he commenced that war upon the liberties of the Italian republican cities, in which finally they vanquished, by the arms and the energy of freemen, the whole might of the empire exerted for their subjugation under the guidance of one of the ablest, as well as bravest of the German chiefs.

²⁰ Muratori's "Antiquities of the House of Este;" Gibbon's "Antiquities of the House of Brunswick." A writer cited in a note to Muratori, says—
'Factum est sub Conrado secundo in pugna quam gessit cum Guelpho Bavarie duce. In ea pugna Guelphi auxiliares symbolum hoc habuerunt, Hic Guelphhi.' Ii vero qui sub Conrado Cæsare pugnant, 'Hic Guibeling' clamant, quod Conradus in pago Waublingen nutritus est."

Conrad was the third of his name who was King of Germany—the second who had worn the Italian crown. He never received coronation from the Pope, and by those who are strictly accurate he is not reckoned among the emperors.

CHAPTER IV.



Republics of Italy—The free Cities the Representatives of the Municipal Institutions of the Roman System—Greatness of these Cities—Accession of the Emperor Frederick I.—His Diet at Roncaglia—Submission of Milan—Its second Revolt—It is levelled to the Ground—Origin of the Lombard League—Frederick marches on Rome—Return of his Army—Building of Alexandria—Contest of Frederick with the Lombard League—Battle of Legnano—Acquisition of Sicily by Marriage—The Emperor Henry VI.—His Son Frederick a Ward of the Pope—Assumes the Imperial Crown as Frederick II.—His quarrel with the Church—His Excommunication and his Crusade in the Holy Land—Manifestoes of the Pope and the Emperor—Attempted Council by the Pope—Seizure of the Bishops by the Pisan Fleet—Death of the Pope—Council of Lyons—Excommunication of Henry—His Death—Early Death of his Son Conrad—Manfred King of Sicily—Conquest of Naples by Charles of Anjou—Conradin Son of Conrad claims the Crown, his defeat and execution—The Sicilian Vespers—Effects of the Papal enmity to Frederick II. and his family—Reflections.

IN other parts of Europe, the origin of municipalities has been referred to the period of the tenth or eleventh century. It has been attributed by many writers to the policy of kings, who endeavoured by giving charters to cities, to raise up a check upon the power of the nobles, or to that of nobles who wished to strengthen themselves against kings. In Italy, which supplied to Europe the example of these institutions, we must look farther back to trace them to their source. At a time when the charters of monarchs were conferring restricted privileges upon the newly created burgher communities of French or

German towns, the free cities of Italy had already become prosperous and great, and enjoyed an almost sovereign independence by a prescription which could not produce, and did not require, one single charter to support their long acknowledged rights.

In the republican institutions of the Roman period, we have little difficulty in finding, not merely the germ of the Italian municipalities, but the identical municipalities themselves.¹ Their free constitutions were not derived from any grants of monarchs, but had descended from the days when they were framed upon the republican model of Rome. The circumstances of Italy under the rule of the German emperors, abundantly account for the power, which at an early age, we find her municipalities able to assume.

The policy of the Romans had been to give to all the Italian towns the privileges of their citizenship, and to establish in them municipalities formed after the fashion of the institutions at Rome. The village of Ulubræ had its ædile in the days of the Cæsars. The larger cities had their civic assembly or curia; their magistrates were annually elected duumviri or consuls, and at the time of the fall of the Roman empire, these cities with their republican institutions existed in every part of Italy. The rule of the emperors, however arbitrary, had not disturbed, even in Rome itself, the forms of republican government. Rome was to the

¹ In tracing the origin of the Italian republics to the Roman municipalities, reference may be made to Savigny's "History of the Roman Law in the Middle Ages;" Rainouard's "Histoire du Droit Municipal;" Hallam's "History of the Middle Ages," especially the note on "municipal government," vol. i. p. 342, 10th edition; Spalding's "Italy," vol. ii. p. 70, et seq.; Guizot in his "History of Civilisation" adopts an opposite view; Troya "Storia d'Italia del medio ævo."

last a republic oppressed by a military dictator. Both in the capital and in the cities of the provinces, the institutions of ancient times remained ready to assert their original liberty, whenever the controlling power, that virtually enslaved them, was withdrawn—with all the framework of a free sovereignty whenever the opportunity of exercising it arose.

No mistake could be greater than to suppose that these institutions perished in the ruins of the empire. In Rome itself, where they were most exposed to the influences of destruction, they survived. The earlier invasions of the barbarians swept over Italy with devastation, but they left its civil economy untouched. The ruin they wrought was material, not political. Attila, and Alaric, and Genseric attempted no settlement on the lands which they ravaged rather than subdued. They pillaged, and passed on. Plunder, and not conquest, was the object of these visits of the Goths, the Huns, and the Vandals. The city that escaped the flames, had no reason to fear from the army of freebooters, any violent interference with its government or its rights. When Odoacer established, for the first time, a Gothic rule in Italy (A.D. 474), he carefully respected all the forms of the ancient institutions of Rome; he exercised sovereign power as “the Patrician,” or lieutenant of the eastern emperor; he was invested with that dignity on the petition of the senate, and during the fourteen years of his reign, Roman consuls were regularly elected.²

Fourteen years afterwards, the Great Theodoric

² Muratori. Gibbon.

established himself as king. The wise and prudent reign of this "barbarian" gave Italy a peace and prosperity, which, under the rule of civilisation, had long been absent from her plains. He also obeyed all the rules, and observed the forms of Roman jurisprudence. So scrupulous was he in respecting the institutions which he found, that the civil government of Italy, under his administration, was exercised only by Italians.

Thus far, we find nothing to disturb the continuance, or interfere with the constitution, of the provincial republics of Italy. They were not destroyed in the short-lived restoration of Roman power, by the conquests of Belisarius and Narses, and we cannot doubt the fact of their existence at the time when Alboin established the Lombard rule over northern Italy.

It was not the policy of the Lombards to destroy the institutions of the conquered people. They were much more disposed to form a partnership with them in their prosperity, their customs, and even their laws. In their history, we find abundant evidence of a state of mixed jurisprudence, resembling that which has prevailed under successive conquerors of India, in which all matters of private right, and the succession of families were regulated, not by the law of locality, but of race. The Lombard brought with him the customs of his tribe, while the Goth and the Roman were permitted to appeal to the laws of those ancestors from whom they had derived their property, as the fittest to prescribe the mode of its enjoyment, and to regulate its descent.

The meagre records of these ages supply us with no

account of the transactions of cities, which probably enjoyed their municipal liberties in an obscure quiet, and had nothing to attract the attention of chroniclers occupied in recording the intrigues and the fortunes of kings. But when we find the same cities that were municipalities under the latter days of the empire, appearing on the page of the history of the Middle Ages with the same republican economy, and even the same Roman names for their magistrates—and furthermore, with all the evidence of freedom long enjoyed and privileges dating from the past—it is impossible to resist the inference, that they preserved their constitution from the days of the Cæsars. The free cities of Northern Italy, which cast a glorious splendour over the darkness of the Middle Ages, were the fragments of the great Roman system which, in the fall of the empire, was shattered, but not annihilated. The liberties of the Lombard league had descended from the traditions of the city destined to be eternal, even in the transmission to remote posterity of those principles of municipal freedom, which in her own institutions, not all the vicissitudes of her government had been able utterly to destroy.

This account of the origin of the republican rights and constitution of the Italian cities does not altogether rest upon inference, however reasonable. If we have no municipal records of Milan, Verona, or Padua, to attest the continuity of their franchises, we do know to a certainty, of other Italian republics which transmitted their form of government through these very centuries. Rome itself supplies the most striking, and

at the same time the most decisive example of the preservation of the ancient republican forms.³ It was in a flight from the first invasion of the Huns that the citizens of Aquileia carried their freedom to the sequestered islands on which Venice afterwards arose. Genoa boasts that behind the shelter of the Apennines she escaped the inroads of the invading hosts. The southern republics of Naples, Gaeta, and Amalfi, had just yielded to the Norman conquerors when Frederick Barbarossa ascended the imperial throne. Their Roman constitution and Roman privileges existed in the days of Hildebrand. If we owe nothing else to the marvellous preservation of the little republic of San Marino to our own days, it at least enables us to point to one city which was a free municipality in the days of Constantine, and in which, through all the vicissitudes of fifteen centuries, that freedom has been still maintained.⁴

The inroads of the Hungarians and the Saracens had the effect of increasing the power and consequence of the northern cities. These cities offered protection to those who fled to them in the troubles that constantly

³ Goldast in his "Constitutiones Imperiales," has preserved many documents of the Roman state during the Middle Ages—professing to emanate from the senate and Roman people. We constantly meet with consuls. It is quite certain that at the period of Charlemagne all the forms of the Roman institutions were still preserved.

Sismondi in his English "History of the Italian Republics," observes, "The ancient courts and municipalities have been retained in all the towns of Italy by their barbarian masters to distribute more equally the burdens imposed by the conquerors and reach individuals more surely."—*History of Italian Republics*, p. 15.

⁴ Mr. Hallam states that the Lombard kings insisted on the demolition of their walls, but that charters permitting them to erect fortifications were granted to them by Otho I.

oppressed the country. We may well believe that at an early period they were surrounded with walls. Many of the Lombard cities had their ramparts and their fortresses in the days when the Roman empire was threatened with the first invasions of the Goths from Gaul. The walls of Verona resisted more than one siege, and the poet who describes the repulse of the Goths at Pallentia in the beginning of the fifth century speaks of

“ *maenia vindicis Asti.* ”

Wherever these fortifications had been impaired by the inroads of time, or broken down by the jealousy of the sovereigns, the contests and troubles that followed the termination of the Carolingian dynasty insured their re-erection, and long before the time of the accession of Otho to the empire, the kingdom of Italy was covered with walled towns.

To the dangers of the same tumultuous times they owed the privilege, or the practice, of convening their citizens as an organised force by the sound of a bell. Their city companies⁵ constituted an armed civic militia, always ready to assemble at the summons of the magistrates of the town. A gonfalonier or standard-

⁵ The institution of these guilds or companies has generally been referred to a Teutonic origin. A fuller examination will show that the associations of tradesmen of towns, into companies or *mysteries*, was, like the whole system of municipalities, of Italian origin. The brotherhoods of the northern nations supplied the model of the feudal orders of knighthood, but city companies existed in Italy before the barbarian invasion. Gibbon tells us that when the preaching of St. Ambrose excited a display of feeling in Milan which displeased the Emperor, the company of merchants and manufacturers of the city was fined 200 pounds of gold, *Gibbon*, ch. xxvii. vol. iii. In the 12th century Florence had its guilds or trade companies arranged in a system as complete as that of the city companies of London. See *post*, vol. ii. chap. vii.

bearer presided over each quarter of the city, and when his standard was displayed, the inhabitants of that district gathered round it, and followed it to the gate or the rampart which their division was appointed to guard. Each city had a carroccio, or sacred car, drawn by four oxen, splendidly adorned with trappings of scarlet and gold. From the summit of the car the civic banner floated, raised high upon a mast, while beneath its waving folds was borne a life-size figure of the Saviour on the cross. Two platforms gave room, one for a band of martial music, the other for a few of the bravest and best of the soldiers of the state. Round this sacred emblem gathered all the feelings of religious veneration, and of national pride, and as it moved into battle with the civic host, every soldier who guarded it was ready rather than permit it to be profaned by the hands of the enemy, to die in its defence.

The very system of imperial rule—that of a distant and imperfect superintendence over the affairs of the Italian kingdom—was in itself the concession of sovereign power to cities thus provided with an armed militia, electing magistrates whose offices were invested with the grandeur of antiquity, and possessing privileges which prescription made sacred. Acknowledging their only superior in a sovereign whose residence was beyond the Alps, who visited Italy but seldom, and left no one to represent him during his absence, these municipal communities exercised of necessity all the rights of self-government. The establishment of the imperial rule, whatever else

might be its consequence, fostered and encouraged the growth of their free power. The visitatorial superintendence of the emperors was obliged to accept local authorities as it found them ; and, by the mere force of circumstances, the municipalities that regulated their markets, and elected their local magistrates in the days of Trajan, became the free and practically sovereign republics of those of Frederick and Henry.

The history of the world supplies no such instance of the impulse and power which freedom gives to the energy of man—not even in the marvellous progress of Britain and the United States in modern days. Judged by the time in which they flourished, the circumstances in which they were placed, and the appliances at their command, the growth of the Italian republics in the Middle Ages throws into the shade all else that we read of the advance of human communities in civilisation and wealth. In days when the skill of man was unaided by those great mechanical discoveries which have multiplied a thousand-fold the power of his arm, these cities supported in comfort a population which almost surpasses belief. In the galleys of the twelfth century a commerce was carried on which raised the merchant princes of Italy to an affluence beyond that of the proudest nobility of other lands. The magnificence of the Venetian nobles exceeded that of kings. Better than this, round each free city a rural district maintained a contented and prosperous population, and within its walls the guilds of artisans supported themselves by their own industry and skill. It was in the midst of constant tumults and commotions

that this extraordinary prosperity prevailed. Occupied in the turmoils of war, they found time and energy to cultivate all the arts of peace. The palaces of their magistrates, and their churches, remain memorials of their architectural splendour and skill.

The Lombard republics had nearly reached the height of their prosperity at the time when Frederick Barbarossa determined to subject them to the more rigorous exertion of imperial authority. The Justinian laws⁶ had diffused throughout Germany extravagant ideas of the sacredness and extent of the rights which descended with the title of Cæsar. Brave, and also generous and just, Frederick believed it his duty to vindicate the prerogative which he regarded as intrusted to him with his crown. While he abhorred cruelty, he was stern and severe. Unhappily, just as he ascended the throne, complaints of wrong and violence, implored on behalf of injured and oppressed Italians, the interposition of his controlling power.

Milan, the first and greatest of the free cities of the Italian kingdom, had given, by her misconduct, just grounds for the interference of the supreme sovereign. The town of Lodi had addressed to the emperor and the diet petitions detailing the oppressions inflicted on them by the haughty Milanese, and Frederick crossed the Alps, and descended with an army into Italy, invested with the character of the dispenser of justice, and the redresser of the wrongs of the injured and oppressed.

⁶ The Pandects of Justinian had been adopted as the law of Germany about twenty years previously, in the reign of the Emperor Otho.

In a diet of the kingdom at Roncaglia, complaints from all quarters were preferred against the Milanese. Frederick inflicted punishment upon some of the cities that had shared their guilt ; but, either from policy or weakness, he deferred striking at the principal offender until after his coronation by the Pope. Proceeding to Rome (A.D. 1154) for that purpose, he at first refused to submit to some of the ceremonies of submission which were rigorously exacted by the haughty Englishman, Adrian IV., the only one of his nation who ever occupied the Papal chair. At last he consented to hold the stirrup while the Pope mounted, and to guide, for the measured nine paces, the palfrey upon which he rode. Returning from Rome into Germany, he brought with him to Lombardy (A.D. 1158) an army of 100,000 men, and proceeded to reduce Milan to subjection. The Milanese retired within their walls, but the very extent of the city exposed them to the dangers that resulted from the difficulty of finding food for a great population. The emperor disposed his army so as to cut off their supplies, and famine compelled the citizens to capitulate upon terms that redressed the wrongs of Lodi, but left untouched the freedom and privileges of the Milanese.

The views of Frederick were not confined to the mere redress of the evils which had first caused his journey across the Alps. He determined to settle the affairs of Italy on such a basis as, by defining the imperial prerogatives and strengthening the imperial power, should prevent a recurrence of the disorders which he attributed to the licence of unrestrained civic rule.

Assembling a second diet at Roncaglia, he found the nobles of the kingdom, supported by the authority of the most eminent of their jurists, ready to admit the loftiest pretensions of imperial prerogative. Placita, or decrees, were prepared extending the regal rights, and controlling those of the municipalities.⁷ Milan resented these proceedings as violating the terms of the capitulation which secured to the city its ancient rights. Frederick replied that these terms had left the legislative power of the diet of the kingdom untouched ; and Milan, placed under the ban of the empire, took up arms in open rebellion. After three years resistance the proud city was compelled to surrender at discretion, and Frederick determined to inflict on it a chastisement which would teach the rebellious that there was a terrible significance in the ban of the empire. While its inhabitants were spared, the city was literally destroyed ; the emperor summoned to its demolition the people of the cities which, in the days of her power, the proud republic had wronged. Pavia, Cremona, Lodi, and Como sent their contingents to execute the revenge to which they were invited. The inhabitants were all driven from the city by the imperial troops.

⁷ Among the invasions of municipal privilege enacted at this diet, was the establishment of the singular institution of the "podesta." Under this name (the Latin potestas) the emperor appointed in each city, an officer who was in fact the judge of the city court, and took all judicial power out of the hands of the popular magistracy. He is sometimes called mayor, but his functions appear, at least in their origin, to have more nearly resembled those of recorder. The institution was preserved when the cities recovered their independence ; in almost all the Italian cities a judge under this name was elected. He held his office for a limited period. The qualification was that he should be a doctor of laws and a stranger to the city. The last regulation was preserved from those established by Frederick.

When they had left it, every house was levelled to the ground ; the churches, which alone were left standing, raised their towers over a desolate waste of prostrate habitations. Those towers, and a heap of shapeless ruins, alone marked where Milan lately stood (A.D. 1162).⁸

The extinction of a great Italian city, second only in civil and ecclesiastical rank to imperial and pontifical Rome, arrayed against Frederick the best feelings even of his own supporters. Both clergy and laity remembered that in that very city St. Ambrose had repelled from the door of its cathedral the emperor Theodosius, because his hands were stained with blood. The homeless Milanese, admitted to the shelter of the neighbouring cities, everywhere excited pity, and kindled indignation. The new laws were soon found to have suppressed the liberties of the kingdom ; and even those who had been the devoted partisans of the emperor, began to swerve in an allegiance which attached them to the oppressor of their native land. Verona, Vicenza, Padua, and Treviso, sent their consuls to meet together and deliberate upon the course to be pursued. These consuls, in the name of their cities, bound themselves to the recovery of their liberties, by a compact ratified by an oath. In that oath, as memorable as that of Uri, was laid the foundation of the Lombard league (A.D. 1167).

Just as the emperor was entering on the war with

⁸ In the spoil of Milan the Archbishop of Cologne carried off the relics of the three kings of the East which are now so gorgeously enshrined in the cathedral of the German town.

the free cities, he involved himself in a contest with the privileges of the Church. Adrian IV. died on the 4th September, 1159. Immediately before his death he had entered into an alliance with the Milanese, and was preparing, it is said, to bring the terrors of an excommunication to aid in asserting the civil liberties of the Lombard towns. On his death, the friends of the emperor made a desperate attempt to secure the election of his successor ; a contest ensued of which each party has given us their version. Fourteen cardinals, the majority of the conclave, elected the Cardinal Rolando, who assumed the title of Alexander III. Three, according to one account, nine, according to another, gave their votes for the Cardinal Octavian, the friend of the emperor. In either case they were a minority, but they alleged a previous compact by which no one was to be appointed except by a unanimous election. When their opponents proceeded to invest Alexander with the cope, it was forcibly torn from his shoulders, and in the presence of the populace—the election was then an open court—an unseemly quarrel took place for the fragments of the pontifical attire. Victor—such was the title assumed by the candidate of the minority—was declared by his partisans to be the rightful pope. An armed band was at hand to support his pretensions. The populace were on the side of Alexander ; the nobles espoused the cause of the imperial nominee. Victor was assailed by the rabble with furious hootings and reproaches, in which the infamies of the last pope, Octavian, were freely associated with his name. Both

the rival popes were compelled to leave Rome : each received his consecration outside the walls.

The emperor assumed the office of arbitrator between them, and summoned the rivals to appear before him in a council at Pavia. Alexander refused to obey the summons. Victor appeared, and succeeded in persuading the partial tribunal that the cardinals who had voted for his opponent had, by their conduct, especially in entering into a secret agreement to elect Rolando, disqualified themselves from taking part in the election, and that, therefore, he had the true majority of legal votes. The emperor withdrew, and left the decision to the ecclesiastics. The council unanimously declared Victor legally elected. Each of the rival popes excommunicated the other. Each in turn obtained possession of the Lateran by force. It ultimately remained in that of Victor, and Alexander was compelled to fly into France.

The year after the destruction of Milan, Victor died. A council of Pavia elected Paschal III. in his room. In the meantime Alexander had returned from France, and occupied once more the seat of the pontiffs. Frederick marched an army to support the anti-pope. After a bloody resistance the Church of St. Peter was literally carried by storm. The gates of the cathedral were hewn down with axes ; the imperial troops fought their way to the high altar ; and Paschal performed his first pontifical mass in a church that was still almost literally reeking with blood.

Alexander was forced to fly, but Frederick did not long enjoy his triumph. The fever of the Campagna

broke out among his troops, and carried off his officers and soldiers with the rapidity of the plague. He hurried northward from the pestilential encampment, but the track of his army was marked by the pits into which they threw their dead. An insignificant town on his march refused a passage to his weakened host, and by devious tracks across the Apennines he led the remnants of his army to Pavia. Only four towns sent deputies to the diet which he summoned ; in a rage, he flung down his glove in the assembly, and challenged the rebellious cities to a pitched battle. After spending the winter in Pavia, he crossed by Mont Cenis into Burgundy. The cities of the league prepared to oppose his return by erecting a fortress in a strong position on the line that leads from the passes of the hills. In honour of the Pope, they called it *Alessandria*. It is still one of the great fortresses of Italy, and all military authorities to this day confirm the judgment with which its site was selected by the engineers of the League. Milan was rebuilt by a union of all the neighbouring towns, and in a marvellously short time it rose from its ruins more splendid than before.

Seven years elapsed before the emperor could persuade his German subjects to raise another army to support him in what seemed the hopeless attempt of subduing Italy to his rule. In 1174 he once more crossed from Burgundy over Mont Cenis, with a formidable army. Burning Susa and Asti, he found himself stopped for four months by the resistance of the heroic defenders of the ramparts which he had contemptuously called "the mud *Alessandria*." At last

the advance of the Lombard army compelled him to raise the siege. Unsuccessful negotiations followed, and in May, 1174, reinforced by a second army from Germany, he marched upon Milan at the head of a host which he believed no strength of the Italians was able to resist.

On the 29th of May, the battle of Italian freedom was fought at the village of Legnano, not quite twenty miles from Milan. Animated by despair, 900 young men, of the first families of the devoted city, had formed themselves into a band, to which they gave the name of "the Company of Death." In the first shock of the battle, the Italians were giving way; the Company of Death knelt down, and solemnly invoking the names of God and St. Ambrose, vowed in the cause of their country to conquer or die. Rising from their knees, they impetuously flung themselves on the advancing Germans. In one wild desperate onslaught they turned the fate of the engagement; their wavering countrymen, animated by their sacred enthusiasm, followed them to the charge. The imperial forces were driven in utter rout from the field. Frederick saved himself by flight, and after wandering some days in disguise, with difficulty reached Pavia, where he found his friends and his empress already mourning his death.

Such was the battle of Legnano, in which imperial force had, for the first time, been brought in contact with the free militia of Italy. It was followed by a truce of six years, negotiated through the mediation of the Pope. The representatives of the emperor and those of the free cities met before the Pontiff in front

of the vestibule of St. Mark, in the neutral city of Venice, and submitted their rights to be adjusted by the suggestions of a species of arbitration, in which both parties advanced the proofs by which they supported their respective claims, although without any binding authority in the arbitrator to decide. It was arranged that the truce, during which Frederick bound himself not to interfere with the privileges of the cities, should last until the 1st of August, 1183. In the summer of that year, a diet of the German empire was held at Constance, at which the rights asserted by the cities were fully conceded, not only to those of the League, but to all Italian towns. They were confirmed in the right of electing their own magistrates, of exercising all civil and criminal jurisdiction within their walls, and even in the mischievous prerogative of private war. The Lombard league was recognised, and its continuance authorised for twenty years; on the other hand, the cities bound themselves to maintain the integrity of imperial rights, rights which, after such concessions, imposed no very violent or intolerable yoke.

The emperor survived the peace of Constance seven years. He visited Italy with his son, and taking up his residence at Milan, conciliated the affections of the Lombards, whom he treated in a manner that showed his anxiety to obliterate all memory of the fierce quarrels in which they had been engaged. He acquiesced sincerely, and to all appearance, cheerfully in the privileges the municipalities had obtained, and neither in his lifetime, nor in the reign of any of his family, was any attempt made in the slightest degree to interfere

with the liberties, of which the peace of Constance was the charter. His power in Italy was strengthened by the marriage of his son Henry, with Constance, the heiress of the Norman kingdom of the Two Sicilies. By this marriage Henry united in his own person, the succession to the imperial crown and that of Lombardy with the splendid inheritance of his affianced bride. Strange to say this alliance, which seemed destined to consolidate and perpetuate the Italian power of the family of Suabia, was the origin of their ruin.

Frederick ended his days a champion for Christendom in the Holy Land. The conquest of Jerusalem by Saladin roused the chivalry of Europe to recover the Holy Sepulchre from the infidel. The emperor was the chief of the third crusade ; he died in Asia Minor, as he was leading the Christian host to the Holy City—either drowned in crossing the little river Alef, or, as others say, of an illness caused by the excessive cold of the waters of that stream.

His son Henry reigned as emperor for eleven years. They were generally years of peace between the emperor, the cities, and the Church. Opposed in his succession to the Sicilian crown by Tancred, a branch of the family of the Norman kings, he easily established the authority which he claimed in right of his wife. It was after the establishment of his authority in undisputed peace, that upon the allegation of a treasonable conspiracy, real or pretended, he commenced in Sicily a course of cruelty which made his memory detested. Prelates of the Church, nobles of the highest rank, were executed with tortures of the most revolting atrocity. Blinding

and mutilations were inflicted upon those to whom his mercy was extended. The bodies of his rival and his son were dragged from their graves. In vain the Pontiff directed against him the censures of the Church, which had often been pronounced for less righteous cause. In vain his empress attempted to mitigate the sanguinary enormities which were perpetrated upon her subjects. In the very midst of these horrors she gave birth, at Palermo, to that son, who as Frederick II. was destined to maintain the last struggle with the Papal power. The Nemesis, which avenges great crimes, might be said to have remembered the dark deeds of Henry, when fifty years afterwards his great-grandson fell by a fate as cruel, in seeking to recover the kingdom upon which those cruelties were inflicted.

Henry died at Naples in 1197, three years after the birth of his son, who received the name of Frederick. The Neapolitan kingdom had long been held as a fief of the Holy See, and by the feudal law the Pontiff became the guardian of the heir. Innocent III., who then swayed the pontifical sceptre, received with the guardianship the management of Naples and Sicily, the kingdoms which were the inheritance of the infant Frederick.

In the life of the prince, who was thus left at the age of four years, the ward of the Pontiff, occurred the last scenes of the struggle between Papal and imperial power ; and in the strange vicissitudes that attended his fortunes, we trace the downfall of imperial authority in Italy.

Frederick II. appeared born to a brilliant destiny.

In his early years there was the prospect that under his sceptre Italy might be united into a great and powerful kingdom. The acquisition of the Sicilian realm had already attracted his family to an Italian residence. Their German influence promised them still the succession to the imperial crown, and when that crown was actually placed upon the head of the youthful prince—an Italian by birth and education,—the heir of the Norman princes—Italian patriotism might well be excused for the belief that the time was come when its country was to be once more the seat of the Empire of the West, and Germany was to receive her laws from Milan or from Rome.

On the death of Henry V. two candidates offered themselves for the imperial throne. Philip, the brother of the late emperor, was during the minority of his nephew, the chief of the Ghibelines. His competitor was Otho, Duke of Bavaria, the head of the family of Guelph. Eleven years of civil strife were ended by the assassination of Philip in a private quarrel; and both parties, weary of war, acquiesced in the sovereignty of the Guelph.


In 1209 Otho was crowned by Innocent at Rome. The chief of the Guelphs proved himself as tenacious of the rights of the imperial prerogative, as any of the Ghibeline emperors, against whose pretensions his family had contended. The pope determined to punish his obstinacy by setting up against him his youthful ward. The hereditary chief of the Ghibelines was sent into Germany as the Papal candidate for the throne. The friends of his family assembled to receive

him, and crowned him king of the Germans at Aix-la-Chapelle. For six years he maintained the contest in Germany with his rival. The death of Otho in 1218 left him in undisputed possession of the empire.

The contest of Guelphs and Ghibelines had become one of factions and families not of principles. The support of the Church did not carry to the standard of Frederick a single Guelph. His opponent's assertion of imperial prerogative did not bring to him the slightest Ghibeline aid. Milan, devotedly attached as it was to the prerogatives of the Papal See, had refused to obey the Pope's command to permit Frederick's coronation with the iron crown, and had braved the sentence of excommunication in preference to yielding. There could be no stronger proof that the principles involved in the quarrel were altogether forgotten in the animosities to which they gave rise. The Ghibelines supported the House of Hohenstauffen in its alliance with the Papal See. The Guelphs adhered to Bavaria even when placed under the ban of the Church.

When Frederick returned into Italy, his guardian had been dead for more than two years. Honorius, the reigning pontiff, performed the ceremony of coronation ; but it soon became evident that with the death of his protector, the emperor had lost the friendship of Rome.

After the death of Innocent, successive pontiffs persecuted with implacable hatred the prince who was placed by one of their own number upon the imperial throne. Attempts have been made to refer that hatred to the



partisan enmity of pontiffs who, imbued with all the prejudices of the Guelph faction, saw their natural enemy in the chief of the Ghibelines. It has been attributed to the far-seeing policy of guarding against the danger to Papal influence which would result from the greatness of a power that, commanding both Naples and Lombardy, added to the might of these realms the weight and the dignity of the imperial crown. The advocates of the Papal Court refer it to the un-Christian character of the emperor himself. If their charges be true, the ward of the Pontiff had made but little progress in Christian principles under the tuition of the head of the Church. The pupil of Innocent was accused of the authorship of a tract in which, under the title "*De Tribus Impostoribus*," our Saviour, Moses and Mahomet are classed together. His encouragement of his Saracen subjects was said to proceed from his infidelity, and his hesitation in joining the Crusades to his disbelief in the Cross for which he was called on to fight. It would seem that the charge of infidelity rested mainly on some expressions in which the doctrine of transubstantiation was perhaps irreverently questioned. No person asserted that he had ever seen the book attributed to the emperor who was thus accused of the scepticism which in later times was the reproach of his Prussian namesake. The emperor himself, in a solemn address to all the nations of Christendom, emphatically denied the charge.

Whether the enmity of the Holy See originated in the prejudices of faction, the dictates of policy, or the just sentiments of offended piety, certain it is that

Frederick was the object of a hatred which in less exalted bosoms would have been called malignant—which no pity softened, and no submission could appease. The dislike of the heads of the Church pursued him beyond the grave—it extended to his children's children, and was only appeased by the actual extermination of his race.

Before his coronation in 1226, Innocent had obtained from Frederick a pledge that he would undertake the deliverance of the Holy Land. Seven years afterwards that pledge was still unperformed. In the interim the Pope had arranged for him a marriage with the daughter of the nominal King of Jerusalem, and the rights of her father's titular sovereignty had been assigned to him. As he was on the point at last of embarking, an illness delayed him, and Gregory IX., who had succeeded to the Papal See, pronounced against him a sentence of excommunication for the supposed violation of his promise.

Frederick replied to the excommunication by a manifesto in which he called upon all the princes of Christendom to make common cause against the usurpation attempted upon their authority by the Pope. His popularity and his influence were sufficient with the clergy of his own realm of Naples to make the excommunication almost powerless; and Frederick, without seeking reconciliation with Gregory, proceeded in the next year to Palestine, and placed himself at the head of a new crusade. His presumption in doing so, while still under the sentence, was a new act of rebellion against the Church. His associates in the crusade were

excited by the missives of Gregory to thwart his movements ; and the Pope attacked his Italian dominions while their absent sovereign was fighting the battles of the cross.

Against all these difficulties the address and valour of Frederick in some degree prevailed. If these dissensions had not disturbed his enterprise, it is probable that he would have succeeded in driving the infidels from the Holy Land.⁹ In danger from the desertion of his brother crusaders, and assailed in his dominions at home, he yet compelled the Saracens to cede to him the Holy City. No priest would consent to place the diadem of David upon the head of the ecclesiastical outlaw, and his own hands crowned Frederick King of Jerusalem. Within two years from his departure he returned, if not victorious, at least successful, from his crusade.

Scarcely had he landed in his own domains, when the invading armies of the Pontiff fled at his approach. Frederick marched his army against Rome. His advance to the city was an ovation. The King of Jerusalem was everywhere welcomed as the successful champion of Christendom. The ban of the Papal anathema was forgotten in the glories of the hero, who had won from the infidels the sepulchre of the

⁹ "If the pope had not hated Frederick worse than his Holiness hated the Saracens, and thereby caused his return to Europe, there is every probability that the emperor would have brought matters to an issue triumphantly."—*Mill's History of the Crusades*, vol ii. p. 201

"Verisimile videtur quod si tunc imperator cum gratiâ et pace Romanæ ecclesiæ transisset, longe melius et efficacius prosperatum fuisset negotium terræ sanctæ."—*Ricardus de S. Germano*.

Saviour. No national feeling interfered with the tribute which was paid to the soldier of the Cross. For the first time since the days of the barbarians, Rome saw an Italian born prince approach her walls as the wearer of her imperial crown. Never before had a sovereign of Germany, since the days of Charlemagne, passed within those walls with the enthusiasm of the people. In spite of all the opposition of the Pontiff, the senate and the people met Frederick on his way, with an invitation to him to enter the city. The haughty Pope was obliged to yield, and a treaty of peace, entered into in the year 1230, was supposed to have settled all differences between the Emperor and the Church.


In the absence of the emperor the Guelph cities of Lombardy had been induced by the Pope to renew their old confederation, and associate themselves once more in the Lombard league, of which the object was now declared to be the maintenance of the rights and independence of the Holy See. They were joined by the cities of Piedmont and the republic of Bologna. When Frederick approached Rome with his army they sent succour to Gregory. Having settled his differences with the Pontiff, the emperor determined to break up this formidable alliance, and reduce Lombardy to its obedience to the imperial crown.

Called into Germany to suppress the revolt of his own son—a pious duty to which that son had been instigated by the Church—Frederick easily enforced submission, and returned into Italy to place himself at the head of the imperialists. A fierce war raged for six

years. After varying vicissitudes that war resulted in the triumph of the Ghibelines. Padua and Vicenza fell before the arms of Eccelino, the imperial lieutenant ; Turin, Vercelli, and Asti were compelled to choose their civic rulers from the imperial party. On the 27th of November, 1237, the emperor in person achieved a complete victory over the forces of the league at Cortenuova. The consuls of the Milanese who led these forces were out-generalled by the skill of the emperor. The confederates lost 10,000 men, and the carroccio of the city of Milan fell into the hands of the imperial victor. It was sent a solemn offering to Rome, perhaps as a significant hint to the Pontiff of the triumph of Frederick's power.

Almost all Northern Italy had yielded to his arms. Milan, Placentia, Brescia, and Bologna were the only cities that adhered to the league. They did so only from the unwise severity of the emperor, who refused all terms of reasonable submission, and left them, in the words of the Milanese, only the alternative, either to die on the battle-field or perish by the halter.

For eleven years the hollow peace had been maintained between the Emperor and the Papal See. Causes of complaint were found to exist on both sides. The Pope had in secret encouraged the resistance of the Lombards. Frederick was accused of fomenting revolts in the Roman city, and even in the College of Cardinals against the Pope. In the close of the year 1238 war between them was again openly proclaimed. Gregory, by dexterous representations of the danger with which the overwhelming power of Frederick threatened their



maritime supremacy, induced Genoa and Venice to enter into an alliance with the cities that still remained faithful to the league. Relying on these slender resources, the undaunted old man prepared for the struggle in which he was to do battle against terrible odds for that supremacy of the Papacy which his predecessors since Hildebrand had not ceased to assert.

Gregory is said at this period to have reached almost the patriarchal age of 100 years. This may be an exaggeration, but his years were certainly far enough advanced to make us regard with wonder the fire and the energy which he displayed. In March, 1239, he pronounced the sentence of excommunication against Frederick in the Church of St. Peter. The anathema was loaded with those terrible imprecations with which the ritual of Rome now accompanied the sentence, and was uttered with those formalities which had not been used in the severe simplicity of the more dignified sentences in which Hildebrand had pronounced in former days the judgment of the Church. There followed then a war of proclamations between Gregory and Frederick, in which both parties appealed to public opinion, with an elaborate argument which abundantly proves that both dreaded and revered the tribunal which they took so much pains to convince. In bold invective, in that peculiar species of reasoning which suits an appeal to men already accepting foregone conclusions, and in that rapid and earnest eloquence which kindles the feelings and carries away the judgment, the documents issued upon either side are not deficient in rough but vigorous strength. The vindi-

cation of the emperor, in which he proved that the charges upon which the excommunication professed to be grounded, were the mere repetition of accusations long since disposed of, carried conviction even to the minds of those who supported the Pope. The real cause of the hostility of Gregory he dare not avow—his dread of the growing strength of a prince whose independence of thought he feared.

Frederick was not scrupulous in the terms in which he designated his opponent. John Knox or Luther could scarcely have employed the language of scriptural invective with more force. Every nation, every monarch in Christendom was appealed to to give righteous judgment. In successive manifestos, the clergy, the Roman people, the kings and governors of the world, were called on to interfere. "Sit in judgment, ye princes ; ye people, take cognisance of our cause ; let judgment go forth from the face of the Lord, and your eyes behold equity." "Wickedness had gone forth from the elders of Babylon, and justice was turned into wormwood." The Pontiff was accused of duplicity, of fomenting rebellion against the emperor, while he professed to be his friend ; of defeating by his conduct the complete triumph in Palestine of the last crusade. The avarice, the ambition, the worldly pride of the haughty churchman were contrasted with the poverty and the humility of the Apostles. The Pope was said to sit in his court "like a merchant, weighing out dispensations for gold, himself signing, writing the bulls, perhaps counting the money." "Ye kings and princes of the earth," continued the imperial manifesto, "lament not for us, but

for the Church : her whole head is sick, her whole heart is faint ; her prince is a roaring lion ; in the midst of her sits a frantic prophet ; a man of falsehood, a polluted priest.” “ The first pope, the Apostle Peter, had said to the lame man, ‘ Silver and gold I have none.’ His successor, when he saw his heaps of gold begin to dwindle, began to limp with the lame man, begging for the goods of this world. Having nothing, but possessing all things, he was for ever seeking what he might devour, and swallow up ; the whole world could not glut the rapacity of his maw.” The Church was called on to bewail that “ her chief shepherd was become a ravening wolf, eating the fatlings of the flock, no more binding up the broken, nor bringing the wanderer home to the fold.” The pope was himself reminded that the Apostle had said of the power of kings, that “ all power was from God, and that he who resisted the power, resisted the ordinance of God ;” and he was commanded “ to receive into the bosom of the Church his elder son, who incessantly and without guile demands pardon :” in the event of refusal he was threatened with “ the vengeance of the strong lion who would pluck up and destroy the horns of the proud.” Nay, the emperor did not hesitate to find a strange parallel for the conduct of the Roman ecclesiastics. “ The Chief Priests and the Pharisees have met in council against their Lord, against the Roman emperor.”

The Pope replied with an equal vehemence and an equally prodigal use of Bible language and imagery to this fierce Philippic. The emperor was described as “ the

beast in the Apocalyptic vision rising out of the sea, with his name blasphemy, with the feet of a bear, the mouth of the lion, and the mottled limbs of the panther.” “He opened his mouth to blaspheme the name of God, he shot his poisoned arrow against the tabernacle ; he set up against the Church the battering rams of the Ishmaelite.” From this extraordinary opening the Pope proceeded to denounce the statements of Frederick against himself as false. He recriminated by accusations in which charges of oppression of his subjects—betrayal of the Christian cause—infidelity—all were heaped upon him by the pen of the father of the faithful. The pity of Europe was invoked for the miserable condition of the Sicilians, who were reduced to live in miserable hovels, who, lying on straw, and with rags scarcely sufficient to cover their nakedness, sustained life upon the coarsest millet bread. The black indictment closed with the impeachment of Frederick as the writer of the blasphemous production, in which he had maintained that “the world had been deceived by three impostors, Jesus, Moses and Mahomet : two died in honour, the third was hanged on a tree. Even more,”—such were the words of the Pope, “he had asserted distinctly and loudly that they were fools who aver that God, the Omnipotent Creator of the world, was born of a virgin.”

The charge of blasphemy which had been already circulated industriously in private tales, when thus solemnly made by the Pontiff, the emperor felt it necessary as solemnly to deny. His next proclamation contained a distinct profession of the orthodox Christian

faith—an expression of the deepest respect for Moses, and a declaration of the unalterable belief of the emperor that the body of Mahomet was suspended in the air, possessed by devils, while his soul was undergoing torment in hell. Determined not to be put down by the reference to the visions of St. John, the emperor, in this manifesto, described the Pope as the beast of whom it was written “there went out another beast that was red, and power was given to him to take peace from the earth.” “If,” continued the imperial expounder of prophecy, “we rightly interpret the words, he is the great anti-Christ who has deceived the whole world—the anti-Christ of whom he has declared us the forerunner. He is a second Balaam, hired by money to curse us, the prince of the princes of darkness who have abused the prophecies. He is the angel who issued from the abyss, having the vials full of wormwood to waste earth and heaven.” The bishops were reminded that God had created two great lights for the guidance of mankind, the Empire and the Church; and Frederick once more declared his determination to maintain to the last against Papal usurpation the rights and the authority which he held by direct delegation from God.¹⁰

Throughout Christendom these proclamations agitated the public mind. The writers in the Papal interest, by their lamentations of the desertions from the cause of the

¹⁰ Milman's “Latin Christianity.” The manifestos of the Pope will be found in Migne's “Patrology.” Those of the emperors in Goldast. The pages of the latter writer are full of official documents of the German empire, which prove that, the language of Frederick, strong as it is, is not unparalleled in the manifestoes of his successors.

pontiff, confess that public opinion was with Frederick. But the severest discouragement which Gregory met with was from the King of France, the sovereign whose piety procured for him the epithet of Saint. The Pope attempted to purchase the support of St. Louis, by an offer to revive in the person of Robert, brother of the French king, the empire of Charlemagne. The offer was answered by a severe rebuke of the "pride and audacity of the Pope, who thus presumed to depose and disinherit a king who has no superior nor even equal among Christians." The attempt to seduce the German powers from their allegiance was not more successful. Several of them in succession refused the perilous honours of a rebel crown. Frederick advanced with a great army against Rome, avowing his determination to enforce his royal power against the person of the Pope himself. In some of his battalions he had provided himself with soldiers who were not to be awed by the terrors of the Papal See. Bringing from Sicily the Saracens who had still maintained the faith of Islam in its mountain retreats, he had settled military colonies of these infidels on the southern shores of Calabria. Ten thousand of the believers in the prophet entered the Papal territories under the standard of the champion of the Cross.

Already had the Pontiff found the advantage of these new and numerous orders which the policy of Innocent had once condemned. Everywhere the friars practised on the fanaticism of the people, and inflamed the passions of the multitude. A new crusade was preached in the name of the Pope, in which Christians were

summoned to take up arms against Frederick as the enemy of the faith. Its volunteers appeared in the battalions of the league, wearing the sacred symbol which had distinguished the warriors who had engaged in the Holy War. Frederick met this proceeding by an order, sternly enforced, that every prisoner who should be found wearing the cross should at once be executed as a marauder.

Struck perhaps by some secret feeling of awe-like that which is said, under similar circumstances, to have influenced one of the barbarian invaders—Frederick stayed his march upon Rome, and turning aside at Apuleia, attempted to bring about a reconciliation with the Pope.

The hesitation of the emperor may have proceeded from the sincerity of that feeling, which in his address to the princes of Germany, he professed. He it was, he said, who “had the deepest interest in restoring peace to distracted Christendom.” While any hope of accommodation prevailed he was unwilling to drive matters to the last extremity of force. The Pope on his part found himself compelled to resort to the measure long demanded by Frederick’s partisans, and convened a general council. That council he summoned to meet in the Lateran, in May (A.D. 1241). In the distribution of summonses which were issued, the bishops who had made themselves conspicuous on the imperial side were omitted—those who were the foremost partisans of the Papacy were invited. The emperor positively refused to permit the meeting of a council without his authority. He protested against the constitution of the council,

and the proposed place of its meeting. He denied that a fair judgment could be obtained from a synod appointed to assemble in the palace of his adversary, and to which only the prelates known to be hostile to him would be summoned. An imperial letter apprised every sovereign in Europe of his purpose. He inveighed against the Pope for inviting not only hostile ecclesiastics, but summoning three temporal lords, who were in open enmity with him. "This council," he said, "was convened not for peace but for war," and he warned the prelates of the dangers which must attend their journey to Rome.

Gregory persevered. He was supported by the clergy of Britain and France. In England the Church had latterly supported the cause of the Pontiff out of opposition to the reigning sovereign, Henry III. The French King had himself suggested the assembling of a council. Several English prelates were brought from Britain by the Papal legate. The French bishops set out in considerable numbers to obey the summons of the Pope. Assembling at Genoa, they prepared to pass by sea to Rome, so as to avoid the dangers of a journey through a country occupied by the imperial troops. Genoa, in the pride of her maritime power, had prepared to convey the fathers of the Church to Ostia, with all the splendour of naval pomp. A gallant fleet, with a convoy more for honour than for security, bore the prelates over the tranquil waters of the Ligurian sea. But at Ostia that fleet was never to arrive. A sacrilegious plan had been formed to rob the vessels of their precious freight. Apprised

by secret information from Genoa of their intended departure, the admiral of the Pisan fleet appeared off the island of Meloria. The Genoese ships were called on to surrender the bishops. On their refusal they were attacked, and encumbered by their episcopal cargo, they were obliged to yield. Nineteen vessels were brought as captured prizes into the Pisan port. The bishops were handed over to the magistrates of the republic, by whom they were treated with a strange compound of severity and respect. The chapter-house of the cathedral was made their prison, and by a delicate attention of the chiefs of the republic, the venerable prisoners were bound with silver chains. The mariners who had effected this singular capture did not feel themselves called on to forego the prize-money which fell to their lot from the seizure of the travelling store of the bishops. The quantity of coin that was taken was so great, that in its distribution the gold pieces were measured out in a wooden vessel to those entitled to share. A portion of the treasure that was seized was the contribution of the English to the Pope's expenses in waging his holy war.

By this daring act the intended council of Lateran was prevented. The effect of the disappointment was so severely felt by the Pontiff, that his death in four months afterwards was generally attributed to mortification at his defeat.

Two years elapsed before the conclave of cardinals agreed on his successor. It was not until the 24th of June, 1243, that a cardinal of the noble Genoese house of Fieschi ascended the Papal chair under the

title of Innocent IV. Allied to many powerful Guelph families—indignant as a Genoese at the humiliation of the flag of the republic—the new pontiff inexorably rejected all the overtures of Frederick for a reconciliation, and determined to pursue him with a war of extermination, as the enemy of the Christian Church and faith.

Passing secretly from Rome to Genoa, the Pontiff convoked a general council, which he summoned to meet at Lyons. He still observed the rule that general councils should assemble within the limits of the empire: one half of Lyons was situated in Burgundy, and the other half in France. In Lyons, however, the deliberations of the fathers were free from all imperial control. After a sitting of three weeks, the council, on the 17th of July, 1245, decreed that for his crimes and iniquities God had rejected Frederick, and would not suffer him to reign. His subjects were not only released from their allegiance, but were forbidden, on pain of excommunication, to obey him. The electors of the empire were invited to name his successor, while to the Pope was reserved the nomination of the new sovereign of the Sicilian realm.

Frederick had in his heart a superstitious dread of this sentence of excommunication, when pronounced not by the Pope, but by a general council of the Church. The very manner in which he braved it betrayed the effect it had produced. Arrayed in his robes, he called his adherents around him, and placing the imperial crown upon his head, he declared that he knew how both to wear and to defend it. This exhibition

of tragic heroism excited the enthusiasm of his friends, but it failed to maintain his own sinking heart. For five years he continued the conflict, at first, with a triumphant success that seemed to defy the anathema of the council. His own fears first betrayed themselves in the cruelties which he inflicted upon the enemies who were placed by victory in his power. These cruelties alienated from him many who were not shaken by the censures of the Church. They gave occasion to his enemies to justify all the allegations that had been made of his previous crimes. The monks of the mendicant orders preached everywhere against him. In the ears of the terrified penitent—in their discourses on the highway—by the bedside of the dying—they taught the duty of opposing the arch-enemy of the Church. Frederick himself had supplied materials for their invectives by appointing Eccelino¹¹ as his lieutenant in Lombardy; and the atrocities of that cruel chief were not unnaturally treated as the crimes of the emperor

¹¹ The crimes imputed to this monster would be pronounced incredible if they did not rest on testimony that compels belief. He delighted in cruelty for its own sake. When the dungeons of Padua were thrown open on his fall, “among the miserable captives, many of whom had been mutilated by torture, were found aged persons of both sexes, and delicate young females, all bowed down with privation and suffering; but it was at the appearance of crowds of helpless children whom the fiend had deprived of their eyes, that horror and pity most agitated the shuddering spectators.”—*Percival's Italy*, Chapter iii. part 2.

“In the single town of Padua there were eight prisons always full, notwithstanding the incessant toil of the executioner to empty them. Two of these contained each three hundred prisoners.”—*Sismondi*.

This monster was hereditary lord of Bassano. He was named captain of the people in several of the towns in the March of Treviso. Pope Alexander preached a crusade against him as the enemy of mankind. At last both Guelphs and Ghibelines united in a compact, ratified by an oath, to destroy him.—*Muratori ann.* 1255, 1259.

“It appears certain,” writes Lord Brougham, “that Eccelino exceeded in

himself. The patriotism of the Italians was appealed to against the man who was employing his Saracen and German troopers to trample on the liberties of their nation and their Church. Conspiracies were formed against him in his own court and camp, and the emperor endured the bitterness which all falling men must bear of seeing those who owed all to his favour the readiest to join in the plots for his ruin. His trusted secretary was detected in an attempt to carry him off by poison. The intelligence of the total defeat of the Ghibeline troops at Fossalta, on the 26th of May, 1249, in an engagement in which his natural son Hensius was taken prisoner, completed his prostration. Worn out by the conflict which for twenty years he had heroically sustained, his energies both of mind and body at last gave way. He implored the interposition of St. Louis and offered to submit to any penance the Church would impose. He promised to follow Louis, who was then in the island of Cyprus, to the Holy Land ; and volunteered an engagement to end his days in Asia, and never more trouble his enemies by his presence in Europe. He secured the good offices of Louis, but before they had time to produce any effect, the emperor died at the castle of Fiorentino, in the kingdom of Naples to whose affairs the last years of his life had been devoted. To his wise and enlightened legislation we shall see hereafter that Sicily owed the

the cruelty of his ferocious reign all the atrocities of the other tyrants whose history has reached us either in ancient or modern times."—*Political Philosophy*, part ii. p. 300.

In the passage immediately following the last extract will be found the most condensed and graphic account of the atrocities thus stigmatised.

existence of that popular element in her constitution, which was maintained until the destruction of that constitution in 1816.¹²

Conrad, the son of Frederick, succeeded his father in the imperial crown. He followed him to the grave in four years. His short reign was occupied in suppressing an insurrection in his Neapolitan territories, the result of the efforts of the Church. Manfred, Prince of Tarento, one of the many natural children of Frederick, had, in the absence of Conrad, maintained his authority with fidelity and courage. The arrival of the emperor with an army from Germany, was instantly followed by the complete submission of the kingdom. Conrad was peaceably established in his dominions, and another long and fierce contest appeared to be preparing for the Pontiff, when, by the death of the emperor at the early age of twenty-six (A.D. 1254), the chieftainship of the House of Hohenstauffen once more devolved upon a child. Conradin, the infant son of Conrad, remained in Germany ; while, in his Sicilian kingdom, Manfred nobly continued to defend the rights of the family, of whose name his actions proved him more worthy than his birth.

Upon the death of Conrad, Innocent believed himself strong enough to wrest, by his unaided power, the sceptre of Sicily from the feeble hand of an infant. He

¹² A full account of his legislation will be found in Lord Brougham's "Political Philosophy," part i. p. 600.

In 1231, he made a digest of all the laws of the realm and published them under the title of Institutions.

"His long reign of fifty years," says Lord Brougham, "was spent in repressing the Baronial usurpations, and establishing regular and wholesome government over the country."—*Political Philosophy*.

broke off the negotiations on which he had previously entered to find a monarch for that kingdom at the courts either of England or of France. The Papal army entered the Neapolitan kingdom, and Manfred was compelled to take refuge among the Saracens, whom his father had established at Luceria. Here he gathered round him the adherents of his family, and was strong enough to drive the Papal troops behind the fortifications of Naples. At this critical juncture the death of Innocent disconcerted the councils, and dispirited the movements of the Papacy; within two years the entire kingdom acknowledged the sovereignty of its youthful heir.

It may, perhaps, have been a matter of necessity for Manfred to strengthen his power by assuming the title of king. The German guardians of Conradin were obliged formally to accede to the compromise by which the crown was secured to him for life, while the reversion was settled on his nephew.

The vigour and genius of Manfred not only established his authority in the south, but was rapidly restoring in Lombardy that Ghibeline ascendancy which, in the days of Frederick, had proved so formidable to the Holy See. The attention of the Papal Court was once more turned to the necessity of granting the Sicilian kingdom to a prince strong enough to assert the title of the donor by his sword, and Pope Urban renewed the offer made by Innocent of the Sicilian crown to Charles, Count of Anjou, the brother of St. Louis, whose marriage with the heiress of Provence had placed at his disposal the wealth and resources of that rich domain.

Pressed by his ambitious countess, who pawned her jewels to find money for the enterprise, Charles accepted the offer, and entered Italy with an army which Urban did not hesitate to recruit by preaching a crusade against Manfred, in the name of the faith. Passing through Rome, he did homage for the kingdom of Naples to the pope, and receiving from him formal investiture, agreed to hold it as a fief of the Holy See, and to pay the annual service of a white palfrey laden with 3000 ounces of gold. In 1265 Charles entered the territory of Naples; and Manfred, meeting his opponent, staked all upon the result of a single engagement. Long and obstinately was the battle maintained by the German cavalry, who had fought with Frederick, the Lombards, the Tuscan Ghibelines, and the Saracens, against the chivalry of France. The outlandish cries of "Hy Gibeline," and "Hy Swabia," were heard from the fierce charge of the German squadrons above the din and the tumult of the fight. When the combatants towards the close of the day were exhausted, Manfred led his reserve of Neapolitans and Saracens upon the wearied French. In the moment that ought to have been that of victory, the Neapolitan barons turned and fled. The panic became general, and Manfred in vain endeavoured to retrieve the fortune of the day by rushing into the thickest of the fight. He met the death of a hero, but his fall completed the ruin of his followers, and the French remained masters of the field.

The new King of the Sicilies revenged with remorseless severity that resistance of the people which he branded as rebellion to their lawful king. Manfred's

widow and daughters were not saved by their sex from ending their days in a dungeon. A licence for indiscriminate pillage and murder rewarded the exertions of the French troops. The Saracen colonies of Frederick were exterminated in a general massacre of the infidels, of whom not one was left alive. The axe and the gibbet unsparingly wreaked the vengeance of the conqueror upon those who had committed the treason of questioning the validity of the title conferred by the Pope. But one retributive justice marked the whole of those atrocious proceedings. The executions included many of those who, at the fatal battle of Grandella, had basely deserted their sovereign in a craven flight.

Charles had still to fight another battle for his usurped dominion. The youthful Conradin inherited the spirit and bravery of his race. When scarcely nineteen years of age, he appeared at Verona with 10,000 men ready to assert his claim to the inheritance of his fathers. The old friends of his family gathered round him. The republic of Pisa, faithful to her Ghibeline traditions, placed its resources at his disposal. Sienna was equally true to her party. In the absence of the pontiff at Viterbo, Rome opened to him her gates,¹³ and, full of hope and confidence, the youthful heir of Hohenstauffen led his followers through the defiles of the Apennines to win with his father's sword the restoration of his father's crown.

¹³ Nothing perhaps can more mark the national feeling which animated the Roman support of papal pretensions, than the fact that the populace of that city who had always sided with the popes against the German emperors

It was the last struggle of the Ghibelines. Victory once more declared on the side of Charles. In a fiercely-contested, and long doubtful engagement on the plains of Tagliacozzo, on the 23rd of August, 1268, a well-devised stratagem gave Charles the advantage over the fiery impetuosity of his youthful foe. Flying from the battle field, the young prince was just on the point of escaping into Sicily when he was recognised and made prisoner. His youth, his misfortunes, his illustrious descent, and the justice of the cause for which he fought, could not move to pity or generosity the heart of Charles. The descendant of emperors was subjected to the insults of a mock trial, and beheaded as a rebel in the public square of Naples. The incidents of his death were remarkable. Even in a packed tribunal, but one judge was found daring enough to pronounce the sentence of death. The rest preserved a solemn silence. On the vote of this single individual Charles declared the punishment of death to be the sentence of the court. It is said that, on the day of the execution, when the sentence was read by the judge who had debased himself to be the instrument of the king's vengeance, a relative of Charles struck him down with his sword, upbraiding him with the injustice of the sentence he had pronounced.¹⁴ All did not save

upon every occasion took part with Frederick II. and his descendants, who were regarded as Italian princes.

¹⁴ "Fu letta la feral sentenza da Roberto da Bari giudice, al quale, se crediamo a Giovanni Villani finita che fu la lettura, Roberto figliuolo de conte del Fiandra, genero del re Carlo, diede d'uno stocco nel petto, dicendo che a lui non era lecito di sentenziare a morte sì grande et gentil signore; del qual colpo colui cadde morto, presenti il re, e non ne fatta parola."—*Muratori, Annali D'Italia*, anno 1268. *Sismondi*, v. ii., p. 468. *Giannone*, l. xix., c. 4.

the youthful Conradin from death. The execution took place in presence of Charles and his court.

His deportment on the scaffold was worthy of his race. Unnerved for a moment by the suppressed cry of pity from the breasts of the multitude, who remembered his father and commiserated his youth, he burst into one touching sob of agony, not for himself but for his mother—"My mother, my mother! dreadful will be thy grief!" Regaining his firmness, he bowed his head upon the block, and, as he stooped to the stroke of the headsman, he flung down his glove in token that he died defying his oppressor, and in the hope that some one lived who would yet revenge his wrongs.

This cruel and unmanly murder was followed by the execution of all the most distinguished of his followers. German princes, nobles of Lombardy, citizens of free cities, expiated with their lives the imaginary guilt of treason to a prince to whom they owed no allegiance. As more fugitives from the battle field were seized new executions made the scaffold of Conradin reek with fresh blood of the noble and the brave. Charles thought his throne could only be secure when his youthful competitor and all his valiant comrades alike lay weltering in their blood.

Thus perished the last heir of the once mighty house of Hohenstauffen and thus was finally consummated in their destruction the Papal vengeance that had so unrelentingly pursued the accomplished and chivalrous Frederick.

The fall of the Sicilian dynasty of this princely family was not only a signal triumph, but a great

advantage to the Papal power. In the early period of its contests with the empire, the alliance of the Norman monarchs had been of inestimable value to the see of Rome. It was this alliance which enabled Hildebrand and his successors to maintain themselves against the might of Henry IV. When in 1084 the emperor had invested the dauntless pontiff in the Castle of St. Angelo—when the pope of imperial nomination was in the undisturbed possession of St. Peter's—the surrender of Hildebrand would have completed the subjection of Rome to imperial power. It will be remembered that at the last hour it was the army of Roger Guiscard that rescued Gregory and Rome from the German troops.

On the other hand, we have seen that the union of the Two Sicilies with the imperial crown was a combination of power which constituted a formidable danger to the independence which the pontiffs claimed. In breaking up that combination a great peril was removed, and the sentence by which, in the council of Lyons, Innocent deposed Frederick from the Sicilian throne, achieved a political result which must have been in the Papal councils a high object of state policy.

Yet the conduct of those who took part in these movements was, at all events in the first instance, unpremeditated. The alliance between Rome and the Normans was accomplished by a German pope, the relative of the emperor, who marched against the latter at the head of his army to punish them for their outrages upon the Church. His defeat and seizure led the way to their submission. It was a pontiff that urged Frederick II. to leave his Sicilian realms, to win the imperial crown ;

and passion, not policy, appears to have instigated the commencement of the quarrel which ensued.

The ultimate triumph of the pontiffs over the family of Frederick was effected only by entailing on Italy the evils of French dominion. Under the extortions and cruelties of their Angevin tyrant the Neapolitans bitterly cursed the sentence that had transferred them from the rule of the imperial house. But for other generations was reserved the full measure of the evils the precedent entailed; the desolating wars of Louis XII. and Francis I. had their origin in the invitation that summoned Charles of Anjou and those marauders whom a Pope did not hesitate to sanctify with the name of crusaders—to execute upon the schismatic house of Hohenstauffen the sentence of the Church.

The evil did not end with the introduction of the French. By a strange destiny the extinction of the house of Hohenstauffen first laid in Italy the foundation of a Spanish power. The enervated Neapolitans endured the cruelties of their new lords. In Sicily the sterner spirit of the hardy islanders inflicted on their oppressors a terrible retribution. The Sicilian Vespers (A.D. 1282) executed the vengeance and accomplished the deliverance of an outraged people; and, upon the faith of an alliance with the family of Manfred, the princes of the house of Arragon were invited by the emancipated nation to ascend the Sicilian throne.¹⁵

Two hundred and fifty years afterwards Italy was

¹⁵ For the history of the Sicilian Vespers and the subsequent expedition, see Amari's "History of the Sicilian Vespers," or the translation of Lord Dunsany.

desolated by the French and Spanish armies, still warring for the very inheritance of which the last heir of Barbarossa was despoiled ; and on his way to the battle fields of the Neapolitan kingdom, a prince of France, who had deserted to the armies of Spain, led the assault on Rome which consigned a Pope to prison, and gave up the city to a pillage the horrors of which made the ravages of the Goths and Vandals seem merciful and just.¹⁶

With the death of Conradin terminated the long struggle between the imperial and papal powers. The Church had come triumphant, although exhausted and demoralised, from the contest. The independence of the Holy See had been vindicated by the complete exclusion of the emperors from interference in the nomination of the Popes. But, in the two centuries through which the struggle lasted, principles and parties had assumed a form very different from that in which they appeared at its commencement. The early contests in which the people and senate of Rome did battle against the imperial prerogative for the popular election of their bishop were forgotten, and the rights of the Pope were no longer identified with the liberties of Rome.

In the haughty pretensions put forward by the Church, the subjects of the dispute are lost sight of. The question of investitures is merged in that of the pretensions put forward in the course of the contest to

mere, Giannone's "*Historia Civile Del Regno*," Percival's "*Italy*," ch. iv. part .
"Muratori," anno 1282.

¹⁶ The sack of Rome by the Constable Bourbon. See post, ch. v.

which that question gave rise. We do not think of Hildebrand as the pious monk in his cell, devising plans for the reformation of the Church, and honestly believing it the duty of a Christian to free the spiritual authority from temporal control ; we see only Gregory VII., the haughty high priest, compelling an emperor to stand shivering in the courts of the castle. The merits or demerits of the contest are forgotten in the amazing spectacle of the imperial penance. The right of electing the pontiff becomes insignificant compared with the power assumed for that pontiff of summoning monarchs to his tribunal, deposing them from their thrones, and actually imposing disobedience as a religious duty on their subjects.

In the case of Frederick II., the See of Rome had reduced the assertion of this right to practice. The sentence of the Church had been executed. The realms of Sicily had been taken from the family whom the decree of the council had deposed, and the forfeited kingdom had been absolutely disposed of by the donation of the Pope. The grandson of Frederick had borne the penalty of his sentence, and the churchman who claimed to be the divine Vicegerent, boasted that in the execution of his decree the sins of the father had been visited on the third generation of his foes.

There are those who believe that by the Papal hostility to Frederick, Italy lost the opportunity of becoming a great and a united nation. Frederick, like his grandfather, had cheerfully recognised the privileges of the Lombard cities. In spite of the factions of Guelphs and Ghibelines which distracted their councils, it is

probable he would have attached to his throne the affection and allegiance of those whose freedom he was ready to secure. His birth, his education, and his tastes, all attracted him to Italy in preference to the far less cultivated region of a German court. The munificent patron of science and learning, even in his distracted reign, he was able to gather round him men of genius, to give an impulse to letters, and to found universities and schools, which became famous as the seats, not only of learning, but of literature and art.¹⁷ Encouraged, instead of thwarted, by the pontiff, he might have been in the greatest of the characteristics of the great emperor, an Italian Charlemagne.

What Frederick might have been is matter of speculation. Unhappily we know the effects which this long and fierce contest produced upon those republican cities whose example had taught liberty to Europe. In the flames which were kindled by the evil passions of that contest, their republican virtues, their public spirit, and the energies of their freedom were consumed. In the last years of the reign of Frederick, we mark the unequivocal indications of their fall. On

¹⁷ Among the charges brought against him by the pope was that of undermining the true faith by opening universities and schools. Sismondi, vol. ii., p. 282, quotes two characters of Frederick, one by Villani, and the other by Jansalli. "The emperor," says the latter, "opened schools in his realm for the liberal arts, and for all sciences. He invited professors from all parts of the world, and offered them liberal recompenses. Not content with appropriating to them a salary, he paid out of his own purse pensions to the poorer students, so that no person of any condition might be driven from the study of philosophy by want." Villani, the Guelph writer, describes him as well acquainted with Latin, Italian, German, French, Greek, and Arabic—abounding in virtues and generosity, but addicted to sensual pleasures, and a disbeliever in a future state.

the formation of the second Lombard league, the cities reluctantly agreed to admit the tribunal of the inquisition within their walls. They did so to secure the patronage of the pontiff, who haughtily told them that he never could regard as allies those who were so indulgent to the enemies of the Church ; in one city alone, sixty persons who belonged to the sect or association of heretics, known as " Cathari," were burned at the stake. They were as ready to surrender their civil as they were their religious liberty to secure the triumph of the cause they had espoused. To ensure the co-operation of the powerful lord of D'Este, Ferrara had set the fatal precedent of appointing him captain of the people, an office which soon made him absolute master of the state. In other cities the example was followed. Milan, in gratitude for the protection afforded to her troops when flying from the field of Cortenuova, named Della Torre, the chief of Vallasina, as the lord of the city. A few years later, many of the other republics of Lombardy placed themselves under the same chief. The relations of the previous centuries were reversed ; the feudal lords then submitted to the protection of the cities, the cities now sought the protection of the feudal lords.

CHAPTER V.

Fall of the Italian Republics—The triumph of Feudalism—Secession of the Pope to Avignon—Rudolph of Hapsburgh—His renunciation of Sovereignty over Rome—Grant of Romagna to the Popes—Henry VII.—Louis of Bavaria—Charles IV.—Wenceslaus—Causes of the fall of the Republics—Employment of mercenary troops—Companies of Adventure—Invasion of Italy by Charles VIII.—Demoralisation of Italy—Louis XII.—Francis I.—The Emperor Charles V.—Sack of Rome by the Constable Bourbon—Siege of Naples—Andrew Doria and Genoa—Florence—Parma—Piedmont—Peace of Château Cambresis—State of Italy after its subjugation by Charles V.—Decline of Papal Power—Wars of the Spanish Succession—Treaty of Utrecht—Treaty of the Quadruple Alliance—Of Vienna—Of Aix-la-Chapelle.

WE have now followed the imperial power through the four great struggles, in one or other of which, from the days of Otho, it had been almost incessantly engaged; first, with the municipal freedom of Rome for the right of nominating the pontiff; second, with the Papacy, upon the subject of investiture; third, with the republics of Northern Italy in the assertion of the royal prerogative against civic privilege; and, lastly, with the Papal See, in that contest in which the conflict plainly and avowedly was between the supremacy of the sovereign and the lordship claimed over mankind by the occupants of the Papal chair.

It was impossible for these mighty conflicts to pass away without leaving deep traces of their influence upon the land which had been their scene. The strife was one that agitated far-off countries, and affected, in its consequences, the interests of distant nations. But it was in Italy that the battle was actually fought. There it was that human thought and energy were summoned to their utmost exertions in these contests which involved the loftiest principles and stirred the deepest feelings of the intellect and of the heart. There they evoked the highest displays of virtue, and there the passions they created, led men to the darkest crimes. To the excitement of intellect and energy which these struggles occasioned, we may, in all probability trace, at least in part, the progress of Italy during the Middle Ages in freedom, in commerce, in literature, in all that depends for success upon the impulse given to the intellectual powers and the enterprise of man.

Not many years after the events recorded in the last chapter, the free cities fell. Republics became principalities, and dukes and marquises held sway where once a fierce democracy had ruled.

The fall of the Italian republics was a revolution, in which feudalism trampled on those principles of republican freedom which had descended in the institutions of ancient Rome. That revolution was not accomplished by any external force or violent convulsion. It was a gradual and a slow one. In the proud days of the Lombard league, that municipal freedom which had already vanquished the feudal lords, maintained itself

against the aggressions of imperial power. Everything then seemed to promise a long existence to the liberties of the free Italian states. With privileges conferred by law—commanding armies the enrolment of which was sanctioned by imperial consent—with the proud recollections of their contest and their triumph—and with a confederation strong enough to resist any force by which they might be assailed, the republics of the Lombard league might well believe that their freedom had been placed upon a secure foundation.

Within 200 years from the peace of Constance, these liberties were gone, and the despotic rule of lordly tyrants was substituted for the free government, the continuance of which, the conditions of that peace had, to all appearance, so effectually guaranteed.

If, in the fall of the Lombard republics, we may thus see the principles of feudalism achieving that triumph over old Roman freedom, which neither the ascendancy of the Goths, the invasion of the Lombards, nor the empire of the Franks or the Germans had been able to effect ; we can hardly avoid noticing that in the government of the Church, a revolution had been almost silently accomplished, as completely subverting popular rights which had descended from the earliest days of Christian Rome. In the destruction of the right of popular election of bishops, the victory of ecclesiastical feudalism had been achieved, and the foundation laid of a system which was to convert the government of the Church into a feudal monarchy, of which the pontiff was to be the supreme lord.

Allusion has already been made to some of the causes which led to the destruction of republican freedom in the towns. In these chapters it would not be possible, even were it desirable, to follow the mazes of their history through the "labyrinth of details," in which we become involved as we trace the annals of each principality or city. It is sufficient to state the general outline of those causes which gradually destroyed their liberties, and left only five republics at the close of the fifteenth century, the survivors of all those which had been once so thickly scattered, the fortresses of freedom, over the land.

The final overthrow of the House of Hohenstauffen did not end the feuds which had distracted Italy in the opposing names of emperor and pope. The factions of Guelphs and Ghibelines still continued their wars between cities, and their cruel strifes in each municipality. At no period did these dissensions more fiercely rage than in the interval during which emperors never appeared in Italy, and in which the policy of the Papal Court was exerted to conciliate differences, which had no longer even the pretext of a public principle to justify them.

Before tracing its influence upon Italian freedom, we must glance at the effect which the struggle recorded in the last chapter produced upon the imperial power.

It was followed by that which has been generally termed the interregnum of the empire. From the death of Conrad, in 1254, to the election of Rudolph, the founder of the dynasty of Hapsburgh in 1273, the crown

of Germany had been nominally claimed by William of Holland, and by Richard, Earl of Cornwall, son of the English king John. The latter, after passing two years in Germany, declared himself unable to maintain the cost of the imperial dignity, and contented himself with enjoying the honours of his nominal rank in London or Paris. It is not matter of surprise that German princes should have had but little ambition for an elevation that seemed to bring with it a fatal destiny. The bravest and best of their chieftains had wasted the years of their lives in the miserable anxieties of a wearing strife. Their noblest families had fallen before the mysterious power which had established itself in the capital of Italy, and issued from Rome its ban, more terrible than that of the empire. When Rudolph accepted the imperial crown, it was with the fixed determination to let Italy alone. The superstitious shrinking from a contest in which so many of his predecessors had suffered, is manifest in his recorded declaration to the German diet, "Italy has already consumed too many German kings. I will not go to Rome. I am king—I am emperor without it. I will serve the commonwealth as effectually without being crowned at Rome."¹

In such a state of feeling imperial power was not likely to dispute with the Popes the local sovereignty of Rome. Innocent III. had already taken advantage of Frederick's minority to compel the prefects and

¹ "Multos Alemannarum reges Italia consumpit. Non ibo Romam—Rex sum—Imperator sum—nec minus pro utilitate reipublicæ me facturum confido quam si Romæ fuisset coronatus."—*Goldasti Constitutiones*, vol. i. p. 311.



officers of the city to forego the oath of allegiance to the emperor, and take one to himself. Rudolph formally renounced all sovereignty in Rome, and the ambassadors who brought this renunciation, confirmed it by an oath which they were authorised to take in his name.²

More than this. He sent a formal deed in which he resigned all pretensions to the territories claimed by the Church, the exarchate of Ravenna, and the long disputed donations of the Countess Matilda. Unintentionally, as is said by some, he surrendered in this deed territories belonging to the kingdom of Italy, to which the Papal See could show no title. His grant comprised all those districts which now form the States of the Church. Soon after the grant was conferred, officers were appointed to collect some tributes in these provinces; they were met by the deed by which they were made the property of the Papal See.³

Until Henry VII. in 1310 appeared at Rome, after the retirement of the Pope to Avignon, no German prince presented himself in Italy to receive coronation either with the golden or the iron crown. When the emperors once more appeared upon the scene of Italian politics, the Pontiffs determined effectually to exclude them from all interference with the sovereignty of Rome. Louis of Bavaria was engaged in a dispute with the Papal power, and his successor, Charles IV., on his accession, was glad to purchase peace by

² Pfeffel's "*Histoire et Droit public D'Allemagne*," vol. i. p. 424.

³ See post, vol. ii. chap. v.

consenting to an oath⁴ that he would accept no office in Rome without the consent of the Pope.⁵

The imperial power, on the other hand, was declared independent even of that nominal connection with the See of Rome which had been hitherto maintained. In 1388 a diet at Cologne, under Louis IV., ordained that it was high treason to assert that the title of the emperor was not complete by election, or that he required either confirmation or coronation by the Pope, and that from the moment of his election he was entitled to be, and to be called, Emperor.⁶

In the accession of a French prince to the Sicilian throne of Frederick, the Papal power had achieved, as we have seen, a great triumph, both for its policy and its pride. Yet the alliance of the Popes with the princes of Anjou, was not without its disastrous influence on the fortunes of the Papacy itself. The ambition that had brought the brother of the French king to Naples, still urged him on to higher aims. "Senator" of Rome—such was the title, now substituted for that of patrician—he aspired to be its master. He

⁴ The exaction of this oath and the importance attached to it, will be understood by recollecting the real character of the Roman constitution. By the election of the senate and people to the office of patrician or consul, the emperor might at any time have been invested with a legal power in Rome. It is said that it was only by virtue of an appointment as patrician that the early emperors interfered in the election of Popes.

⁵ Charles at the same time confirmed the alienation of Avignon to the Popes. It had been purchased from the Countess of Provence, and as Provence was a fief of the empire, the purchase required confirmation. The emperor bound himself not to return to Italy without the Pope's consent.—*Pjeffell's Histoire et Droit Public D'Allemagne*, vol. i. p. 521.

⁶ *Goldast*, vol. i. p. 336. The kings of Germany did not act on this by assuming the title of emperor without coronation until the days of Ferdinand I. In the reign of his successor Maximilian, it was formally sanctioned by another constitution of the diet.

attempted to retain the title and the power of Vicar of the Empire, even after Rudolph had been elected emperor, at the instance of the Pope ; and before the outbreak of the Sicilian Vespers, with difficulty the Pontiffs had succeeded in curbing the influence of Charles, an influence which plainly aimed at the sovereignty of Italy, and the virtual subjugation of Rome.

In these struggles, although the ambitious projects of Charles were defeated, a result ensued which was altogether unexpected. By the nomination of cardinals, which Charles was able to accomplish, the influence of the French in the conclave was secured ; it was exercised under the control of the French kings. This led in the year 1305 to the transfer of the Papal residence, first to Lyons and then to Avignon, and when after seventy years an attempt was made to restore to the pontifical city the presence of the Pontiff, the same influence created that schism, which for thirty years after, still kept a Pope at Avignon, to dispute with another at Rome the spiritual supremacy over the Christian World.⁷

⁷ In 1305, upon the death of Benedict XI., the Archbishop of Bourdeaux was elected Pope. Entirely under the control of Philip, King of France, the new Pontiff, who assumed the title of Clement V., summoned the cardinals to attend his coronation at Lyons, and fixed the Papal residence at Avignon.

Avignon was in the county of Provence, within the kingdom of Burgundy, and therefore within the nominal limits of the empire.

The pontifical residence continued without dispute at Avignon until the death of Gregory X., in 1378. This Pontiff died during a visit to Rome ; according to the rule of the Roman Church, the conclave for the election of his successor assembles at the place where the Pontiff happens to die, and, on his death, violent commotions at Rome attended the election of his successor. The Roman populace insisted on the election of an Italian, and, under their influence, Urban VI. was unanimously elected. Six months after the election the cardinals in the French interest

When Henry VII. entered Italy in 1310, the revolution, which was placing the country under the dominion of a number of despotic powers, was already far advanced. While the forms and names of their ancient government were still maintained, almost all the cities of Lombardy were submitting to some signor or lord, whom one or other of the factions invested for their own purpose with dictatorial power. The Pontiff had fixed his residence in France, and Henry received coronation from the hands of legates sent to Rome for

the majority of the council, retired to Anagni, and declared that their votes had been given under compulsion. They elected Clement VII., declaring the election of Urban void. Clement fixed his court at Avignon, while Urban continued to exercise his Papal functions at Rome. A college of cardinals and all the forms of pontifical election were maintained at each place for thirty years.

In 1409, a general council was called at Pisa by the cardinals of both parties. This council only made matters worse by pronouncing the deposition of both Popes, and electing a third Pope under the title of Alexander V. in his room.

Although Alexander was acknowledged through the greater part of Christendom, each of the other Popes had still their adherents, and the Christian world witnessed the scandal of three rival pontiffs all claiming to be its rightful chief.

A few years later, under the influence of the emperor Sigismund, another council was assembled at Constance. The Pisan Pope had already a successor in the person of John XXIII. This prelate, said to have been a pirate in early youth, was solemnly deposed upon charges of depravity and crime. The Roman pontiff abdicated at the request of the council. His rival of Avignon was deposed. And, on the 11th of November, 1417, unity was restored to the Church by the election of Martin V., who restored its episcopate to Rome.

Other questions agitated the council, and led it to a quarrel with the Pope, Eugenius IV. This resulted in a decree for his deposition, and the election of Amadeus, the ex-Duke of Savoy. (See next chapter.) This schism was neither very general nor very lasting. After ten years Amadeus resigned his tiara, and the election of Nicholas V. gave to the torn and distracted Church another undisputed Pope.

For the history of "the great schism of the West," see Riddle's "History of the Papacy," Milman's "Latin Christianity," Muratori, *ad annos*, and Sismondi, vol. v. p. 371.

noticed causes had insensibly led to the subversion of the liberties of communities once so powerful and free.

In one important respect, the Italian municipalities differed essentially from those of other countries. They included in the roll of their citizens the nobility of the district in which they were situated. This, while it seemed to add, and did in fact, add to the splendour of the cities, was yet one of the principal elements of their decay.

The great territorial lords of Northern Italy were compelled to seek the protection and friendship of these powerful communities, and frequently submitted to their rule. Many of them were bound to reside for a certain portion of each year within the walls of the city whose citizenship they had sought or been compelled to accept. An historian of the reign of Frederick I., complains—"The cities so much affect liberty, and are so solicitous to avoid the insolence of power, that almost all of them have thrown off every other authority and are governed by their own magistrates, insomuch that all that country is now filled with free cities, most of which have compelled the bishops to reside within their walls, and there is scarcely any nobleman, how great soever he may be, who is not subject to the laws and government of some city." ¹⁰

Elsewhere the same writer observes, that the Marquis of Montferrat was almost the only baron who had preserved his independence, and had not become subject to the laws of any city. The cities of Italy had been

¹⁰ Otho Frigisensis.

A disputed succession to the empire made practically an interregnum of ten years. When Louis of Bavaria entered Italy, in 1327, it was rather to extort treasure from his Ghibeline supporters, than to restore peace to the distracted country. He attempted the establishment of a cruel despotism over all. He arrayed once more on the side of the Guelphs whatever sympathies for liberty survived. After betraying all his friends, and disorganising the supporters of imperial rule, he left Italy within two years.

The visit of his successor, Charles IV., tended still more to degrade and weaken the imperial authority ; a visit only remarkable for having restored to the republic of Lucca the independence of which Florence by conquest had deprived it. His son, the feeble and mercenary Wenceslaus, interfered only in the affairs of Italy by the grant of 1395, which erected the Milanese territories into a duchy, in favour of the family of the Visconti.⁹ So completely had Lombard liberty been destroyed, that the district contained in this grant—a district which Visconti was to hold as a fief of the empire—included all the cities which had once formed the Lombard league.

While imperial power was thus declining in Italy, the free cities that had resisted it in the days of its might, were gradually falling under the dominion of feudal tyrannies which arose upon the ruin of their republican institutions. The slow operation of un-

⁹ The sale of this charter to the Visconti was one of the charges upon which the German diet deposed Wenceslaus. The act of deposition is preserved by Goldast.—*Imperial Constitutions*, vol. i. p. 379.

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free before the institution of the feudal lordships, and were not, as in other places, dependent upon the privileges which it might suit the convenience of a baron to tolerate, or a monarch to create.

This admission of a territorial aristocracy into the association of the burghers, if at first it gave strength and elevation to these communities, subjected them on the other hand to the danger of falling under aristocratic influence. The great nobles built palaces in these towns: these palaces became feudal fortresses in the centre of the cities. Attended by armed retainers from their estates, they fortified their mansions, and in many instances commanded the city by these military strongholds. The citizens not only tolerated but encouraged this for the sake of the strength which the retainers of these noblemen brought to their military force. In the wars in which they were frequently engaged with each other, it was of no small importance to one of these cities to command the vassals of a great lord. By the presence of such an aristocracy, sharing in all the councils of the community, the very principle of republican equality was insensibly destroyed. The nobleman who dwelt in his feudal castle frowning over the streets of the city—who was master of no inconsiderable portion of their army—and who brought into their assembly the influence both of wealth and power, was very likely to become, when any emergency gave the opportunity, the protector instead of the protected—the master instead of the subject of the state.

It is to the evil passions evoked by the contests of Guelphs and Ghibelines that we may directly trace



the ruin of the once great and free Italian cities. The discords of the parties calling themselves by these strange designations, survived the principles involved in the original dispute. In process of time they represented little more than the animosities to which the contest had given rise. There had been a Guelph emperor and a Ghibeline pope. It is scarcely possible to describe the intensity of the hatred that prevailed between the factions who ranged themselves under the rival banners. The cry of Guelph or Ghibeline was an easy appeal to the passions of those who, without troubling themselves with nice distinctions, were glad to find a compendious political creed in loyalty to a faction, and a substitute for principle in attachment to a name. These watchwords arrayed city against city, and inflamed their old jealousies by the excitement of a new and a more rancorous rage. They did more, they separated many of the cities into two hostile and irreconcilable camps. Religion and loyalty, the two most powerful passions that influence men in public affairs, were supposed to be the animating principles upon either side. The Ghibelines hated the Guelphs with the hatred which loyal subjects bear to the enemies of the sovereign. The Guelphs retaliated with the malignity with which pious Christians were taught to regard the enemies of their faith. In vain both popes and emperors attempted to reconcile these differences, and mitigate their feuds. The loyalty of the Ghibelines did not embrace obedience to the emperor when he commanded them to forego their vengeance on the Guelphs. The devotion of the Guelphs to the Church was too

powerful to permit them to attend to the Pope's commands, when they counselled forbearance to his Ghibeline foes. The war was literally one of life and death. The ascendancy of one faction in a city was generally followed by the exile of the other. Confiscation, and even death, not unfrequently awaited the chiefs of the defeated party. In these civil commotions, the first law of nature came to the aid of the rancour and passions of contending factions. To preserve themselves, they must trample on their foes. To crush their antagonists became an object to which everything else must be sacrificed—honour, virtue, even public liberty itself. The surrender of the lordship of a city to a nobleman or to an adventurous brigand, was not too dear a price for the defeated party to pay for the suppression of an ascendancy under which their native city became no place for them to dwell.

For the satisfaction of the taste which was thus acquired for civil strife, the public feuds were insufficient. In some cities the Guelphs, when they became too strong for opposition, could only gratify their passion for discord by dividing themselves into two subordinate factions, under the names of Black and White Guelphs. In others the deadly quarrels were kept up between two rival families, whose hatreds marshalled the whole community into hostile camps. The genius of Shakspeare has portrayed in the feuds of the Montagues and the Capulets a scene from actual life. Similar scenes were realised in many an Italian town. There was no form or variety of civil discord—religious, political, personal, or genealogical—which did not dis-

tract the communities that passed an existence of perpetual and unintermittent strife upon the Italian soil.

In such a state of things, the assumption of power over a city became comparatively easy to the great lord who, resident within its walls, was naturally the leader of one or other of the contending factions. The safety of the party very often required a dictatorship in their chief. It was, at all events, the safest and the easiest method of keeping down their foes. To these two causes, to the violence of faction, and to the admission of the great feudal lords to the citizenship, we can directly trace the transactions by which many of the cities surrendered their independence. To meet the influence of an opposing chieftain in Milan, the Pope sent as its archbishop a member of the powerful family of Visconti. Its prelate soon became its lord.

As the cities fell under the rule of princes, the number of these princes was speedily reduced. The lords of the more powerful brought those of the weaker under their sway. The dominion at first confined to a city, soon included districts containing many cities within their limits. The Duchy of Milan, erected by the emperor in favour of the Visconti, represented a sovereignty extending over the whole of the Milanese. Alessandro Medici, Duke of Florence, soon merged that title in the higher one, which conferred on him the Grand Duchy of the Tuscan states.

With the subjection of the cities to tyrants¹¹ the habit became general of employing mercenary troops. Afraid

¹¹ The Greek *τυραννος*. No other word expresses the position of the signor, or lord, who usurped the government of a free city in Italy as in Greece.

powerful to permit them to attend to the Pope's commands, when they counselled forbearance to his Ghibeline foes. The war was literally one of life and death. The ascendancy of one faction in a city was generally followed by the exile of the other. Confiscation, and even death, not unfrequently awaited the chiefs of the defeated party. In these civil commotions, the first law of nature came to the aid of the rancour and passions of contending factions. To preserve themselves, they must trample on their foes. To crush their antagonists became an object to which everything else must be sacrificed—honour, virtue, even public liberty itself. The surrender of the lordship of a city to a nobleman or to an adventurous brigand, was not too dear a price for the defeated party to pay for the suppression of an ascendancy under which their native city became no place for them to dwell.

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of trusting to the militia of the citizens, these petty lords employed bands of hirelings, who, under the name of Companies of Adventure, sold their swords and services to any one who would pay them. The emperors, on their visits, were in the habit of bringing in their train German guards, who frequently were not required to return with their master to their native land. These men were too glad to accept any service which retained them in the wealthy country and luxuriant climate to which they had come. The citizens even of the free cities were flattered by the strange argument which found a justification for the employment of mercenaries, in the philosophical reflection, that the citizen who thus escaped military service was, in his attention to his proper business, contributing far more to the wealth, and therefore to the greatness of the community, than he could do in the profession of arms. The argument was specious. It would have been true if public spirit and patriotism formed no part of the possessions of the state. With this fatal habit of substituting mercenaries for the national militia, passed away the greatness of the Italian cities. Milan had far degenerated from the days of Legnano when the mercenary ferocity of hirelings was substituted for the enthusiasm of her own free youth; and, under her once proud banners, the "Company of Adventurers," took the place of the "Company of Death."

The employment of these mercenaries soon led to evils of the most aggravated kind. Bands of adventurers were formed in Germany, and came into Italy in regular military array. Subsisting by the pay of

their profession,—when their services were not required by any of the lords or cities, they supported themselves by contributions levied on the inhabitants. Travelling through the country from district to district, the smaller companies exacted their black mail from individuals, the greater ones did not hesitate to demand it from cities. One of these predatory armies was dispersed in a pitched battle fought with them by the Milanese, in defence of their menaced city. Another, known as the Great Company, under the command of a German duke, was broken up in an unsuccessful foray upon Florence.¹² Generally, however, they were more prudent in selecting the objects of their attack ; and, from one extremity to another, Italy was plundered and ravaged by these predatory bands. The intervals of respite from internal war were of course the periods at which the country was harassed by those who were thrown out of employment by its cessation, and were obliged to make war upon their own account.

Worse than all was the demoralisation that followed such a state of society. It was one in which the wild passions of barbarism were mingled with the luxuries and vices of opulence and civilisation. Power gained by violence or treachery was used with cruelty, and men

¹² The most celebrated of these companies was the White, or English company, commanded by Sir John Hawkwood, an adventurer of low extraction, knighted by Edward III. for his bravery in the war with France. The "Great Company" was under the command of Werner, who wore a breastplate with the inscription, "Enemy to God, to pity and to mercy !" Spalding's "Italy," vol. ii. p. 150 ; Hallam, vol. i. p. 499 ; Stow's Chronicle (Richard II.), pp. 308, 309. Miley's "History of the Papal States," vol. iii. p. 361, contains a very full and interesting account of the Condottieri. Ferrari, "Histoire des Revolutions de L'Italie," vol. iii. p. 443. Deunistoun's "Dukes of Urbino," vol. i. p. 319.

became accustomed to the ascendancy of successful crime. Tyrants, who usurped the government, maintained themselves in its possession by all the instruments of arbitrary rule. Their private vices were as infamous as their public crimes. A cruelty, as ferocious as that of the wildest savages, while it did not brook the restraints, availed itself of the artifices of civilised life. Poisonings and assassinations carried off the enemies whom force could not destroy. The horror of these crimes was lost in the frequency of their repetition. The Church did not escape the demoralisation of the age, and, under Borgia and his execrable son, the chambers of the Vatican were polluted by infamies, and desecrated by horrors, the records of which the honour of Christianity and that of human nature alike command us to cover with a veil.

It was in the hateful pontificate of Borgia that Charles VIII. of France led, in 1494, his French army to claim the Neapolitan possessions of the house of Anjou. In the two hundred and fifty years which had passed since Charles of Anjou had first come to seize those territories, Italy had been altogether changed. The republics of Lombardy were gone. After the extinction of the family of the Visconti, Milan and the district of the Milanese made a short-lived attempt to recover its ancient liberty, but only to fall, after a brief interval, under the rule of the Sforza. The Marquisate of Mantua, under the Gonzaga, occupied a portion of Lombardy to the west of the Adige. The Venetians had extended their territory to the eastern banks of that river. Padua, Verona, Brescia, and all the cities between the

Adige and the sea, had been subjected to the Queen of the Adriatic. Bologna was ruled by the family of Bentivoglio. The great house of D'Este governed Ferrara and Modena.¹³ All the cities of Tuscany, with the exception of Sienna and Lucca, had fallen under the dominion of Florence. That city, still under the name and form of a republic, was virtually governed by the Medici. Even Genoa had accepted the protection of the Duke of Milan as her prince. Venice, Lucca, and Sienna alone maintained the reality of republican government in Italy.

In the year 1441, the kingdom of Naples had been united to the Sicilian realm of the King of Arragon. Charles claimed, under a title not necessary to trace, the right to the throne which was transmitted through the house of Anjou. Entering Italy in the month of August, 1494, he overran the whole country without opposition. The Florentines had prepared for resistance, but their cowardly chief, Pietro de' Medici, was seized with terror at the approach of the French, and, proceeding to meet Charles, surrendered to him several fortresses of Tuscany. On returning to Florence,

¹³ It must be remembered that the grant of Romagna and the other provinces to the Pontiffs did not interfere with the lordship or sovereignty of those princes who had held their territories as fiefs of the empire, or of the kingdom of Italy. They continued still to hold them under the Pope. The Holy See was substituted for the emperor as lord paramount of these domains.

The free cities were left in the same position as they had been before. The rights of the Pope over Bologna were no greater than those of the emperor had been.

The conquest of Romagna, that is, the extinction of its princes and the subjugation of its free cities, was achieved at different periods—in great measure by the infamous Cæsar Borgia, under circumstances that darken the annals in which these events are recorded. See *post*, vol. ii. chap. v.

he found guards placed before his palace who refused him admission. From the indignant voice of the people, enraged at the baseness of the surrender, he fled in consternation. Still the gates of Florence were opened to Charles, as were those of Rome. The Neapolitan kingdom surrendered without a blow. Its king, Alphonso, fled to Sicily, and Charles was acknowledged as sovereign.

His rapid success alarmed the Northern States for their independence. The Duke of Orleans, whom he had left in Lombardy, alienated the Duke of Milan by himself advancing claims, as the heir of the Visconti, to the Milanese. An alliance was formed against the French, which was joined by the Venetians, the Pope and the Duke of Milan, and protected by the Emperor Maximilian, and the King of Arragon, now assuming the title of King of Spain. Charles was forced to make his way back into France, and, immediately after his departure, a Spanish army invaded and reconquered Naples.

Charles VIII. died on his return to France. His distant relative, the Duke of Orleans, under the title of Louis XII., ascended the throne. Louis was not slow in asserting his Italian claims. On his accession he assumed the titles of King of the two Sicilies and Duke of Milan. Marching with an army into Lombardy, he made himself master of the Milanese Duchy. By an unprincipled bargain with Ferdinand, King of Spain, he agreed to seize jointly with him the kingdom of Naples and then partition it between them. Ferdinand, however, did not respect the good faith which is proverbially said to belong to such transactions, and, after

unsuccessful attempts to enforce his bargain, Louis was obliged to leave the two Sicilies in the undisputed possession of the Spanish crown.

Thus was accomplished the annexation of Naples to Spain, which for two centuries subjected that kingdom to the oppression of successive Spanish viceroys, many of whom appeared to regard plunder and extortion as the only duty of a delegated government.

In the north of Italy, the French king was compelled to maintain his right to the Milanese duchy by constant wars. After joining in the league of Cambray against Venice—a confederation which brought that republic to the brink of ruin—Louis was himself the object of a new combination, formed by Pope Julius II., called the Holy League, of which the real object was to drive all foreigners, or, as the Pope still called them, barbarians, out of Italy. This was followed by the expulsion of the French from Milan, and the restoration of the duchy to the family of Sforza. Against an effort of Louis to resume his conquest, Milan was protected by the bravery of the Swiss mercenaries whom Sforza had employed. The invading French sustained a signal defeat, which no effort was made to avenge in the lifetime of Louis, who died in 1515.

His successor, Francis I., immediately on his accession attempted, and with success, to retrieve the disasters and disgrace of the French arms. The terrible battle of Marignano annihilated the bands of the heroic Swiss, and made Francis master of Milan. The only result was, however, to provoke a war, which ended in leaving the French without an acre of territory in Italy, and

subjecting the Peninsula to the dominion of the power which of all they most hated.

Four years after the accession of Francis, the death of the Emperor Maximilian placed his grandson Charles in possession of the hereditary dominions of the house of Hapsburgh. Through his mother he had already inherited the vast possessions of the King of Spain. Master of the Netherlands, of Spain, of the Two Sicilies, and of the German possessions of his family, he was by far the most powerful monarch in Europe. Francis was his competitor for the imperial crown. On the 28th of June, 1519, the diet at Frankfort elevated the King of Spain to that dignity, and henceforth he is known in history as the Emperor Charles V.

To other narratives belongs the detailed account of the contests which for the next eleven years desolated Italy. The politics of that country were no longer regulated by the interests of any of her states, but by those of European combinations. The struggle on the soil of Italy was to determine whether French, or Germans, or Spaniards should prevail.

Charles was not slow in assailing in Italy the power of the French king. On the 19th of November, 1521, his troops entered Milan, and a Sforza assumed once more the title of its duke. In 1525, at the battle of Pavia, Francis was made prisoner. Released upon terms which he violated, the French king attempted once more to dispute the power of the emperor in Italy. A second holy league had been formed under the presidency of the Pontiff, Clement VII., to resist the ascendancy of Charles. On the 5th of May, 1527,

the Constable Bourbon, a renegade from the cause of his native country, led to Rome an army of Germans and Spaniards whom want of pay and of a commissariat had converted into brigands, subsisting on the plunder of the countries through which they passed. The Pope was seized and detained as a captive ; Rome was abandoned to a pillage, in which neither the sanctity of homes, nor the sacredness of churches, was spared. For nine months a brutal soldiery were permitted to continue their excesses unchecked. The plunder of private houses was not sufficient to satisfy their cupidity ; the ornaments were torn from the sanctuaries of the churches and the shrines of the saints. Torture was used to extract from the citizens the supposed secret of their concealed treasures. Those horrors, which, when tolerated even in the first moment of inflamed passion, are the ineffable disgrace of civilised war, were systematised and pursued at Rome with the deliberate and cold-blooded atrocity that continued them for nearly a year.¹⁴

Genoa, a few years before, had been subjected to a treatment almost as detestable. The city was given up to be plundered by the Spanish troops. The mansions and stores of her merchant princes were rifled of all that they contained ; and it gives us some idea, both of the extent of Genoese commerce, and of the ravages

¹⁴ The Constable Bourbon was killed in the assault. His memory is therefore not answerable for these atrocities. Charles V., while the Pope was kept in captivity by his own generals, desired prayers to be offered up in all the Spanish churches for the release of the holy father.

For the history of this period see Muratori, anno 1527, Guiccardini, books xiv. and xviii.

of the soldiery, to find that the ruin of so many of the Genoese merchants gave a shock to mercantile credit throughout Europe. At Genoa there were no German troops; the work of plunder had been done by the Spaniards. At Rome, where both armies united, the profligate drunkenness and debauchery of the German soldiers was, by the suffering Romans, favourably contrasted with the atrocious cruelties committed by those of Spain.

Rome was not the only city in which these continued scenes of ruthless military license were enacted. Its pillage was undertaken, not from political motive, but to satisfy a soldiery for whose pay, or sustenance, no provision had been made. The same necessity existed wherever the troops of Charles were placed. They were supported by a permission to billet themselves on the inhabitants of the town; and the house that received one of them as an inmate, was subjected to every indignity that might be prompted by the passions or the avarice of its guest. Without the means of paying them—their officers, even if they had the will, had not the power to control them. The wages of the soldiery consisted in a licence to plunder, and they insisted on availing themselves of that licence almost in any manner they chose. Great part of Italy was given up to the passions of an undisciplined and licentious host.

In 1527, Henry VIII. of England and Francis I. of France entered into an alliance, in which they were joined by the republics of Venice and Florence, the Dukes of Ferrara and Mantua; its object was stated to be the deliverance of the Pope. A magnificent

French army, under the command of Lautrec, entered Italy. The Pope effected his escape from the Castle of St. Angelo, where he had been kept a prisoner, and joined the French camp. The only effect of the arrival of the French was to add to the sufferings of the unhappy country. The demoralised banditti of German and Spanish troops could offer no opposition to the march of that army. Yet the sack of Parma in the north, and of Amalfi in the south, were retaliations for Spanish cruelties, which gave but little satisfaction to the Italians, who were successively the victims of the rival atrocities of both contending parties. Lautrec finally attempted to force the surrender of Naples by a blockade. Famine and pestilence committed their havoc among the wretched inhabitants of the beleaguered city. The latter inflicted still more terrible ravages on the besiegers. On the 20th of June, the French army numbered 25,000 men ; on the 2nd of August, but 4000 fit for service could be mustered in the ranks. Lautrec, their general, whose obstinacy led to the miseries of this ill-omened expedition, fell himself a victim to the malignant disease which had destroyed his troops. The general who succeeded him, attempted to escape under shelter of a storm. His soldiers were too weak even to fly, and, pursued by an enemy almost as wretched as themselves, they were compelled to capitulate, and surrender to the Spanish the privilege of thrusting into crowded hospitals men stricken with disease and death. The French army literally perished ; and of that once brilliant host, a few miserable invalids alone returned to France.

Another French army had entered Lombardy. On

the 21st of June, 1529, it was surprised by the Spanish commander, and its general and many of its officers made prisoners. It was time for this dreadful war to cease ; in desolated and bleeding Italy there was but little worth contending for. Two women met at Cambray, and determined that it should end. Margaret of Austria, the aunt of Charles, and Louisa of Savoy, the mother of Francis, arranged the terms of a peace. The Turks were at the walls of Vienna, and Luther had already shaken Christendom by the rapid progress of the Reformation. The emperor was anxious to hasten back to Germany, and gave his assent to the "*traité des dames*." France formally renounced all interference in Italy, and left the triumphant emperor to deal with the country as he pleased. Charles had already made a treaty of peace with the Pope, in which the pontiff was content to receive as compensation for all he had suffered, the privilege of restoring his relatives, the Medici, to the sovereignty of Florence.

Genoa alone regained her liberties at the close of this disastrous period. Her great citizen, Andrea Doria, had been in alliance with the French king ; he had commanded the naval forces of Francis, to which he added some galleys of his own. Leaving the service of France without dishonour, he went over to that of Charles, when his accession exercised a powerful influence on the fortunes of the war. In gratitude, the emperor offered him the sovereignty of Genoa, with the title of its duke. The illustrious patriot asked and obtained instead, the restoration of the independence and freedom of his native city.

The emperor landed at Genoa from the fleet of Doria on the 12th of August. Proceeding to Bologna in November, he summoned before him the princes of Italy, whose fate as a conqueror he had the power to decide. It may have been the state of Germany, that imposed on him the moderation which he displayed. To Sforza was granted, for a sum of money, the investiture of the Duchy of Milan, as a fief of the empire. Modena was confirmed to the chief of the house of Este. The Venetians held their acquisitions in the terra-firma, and Genoa, Lucca, and Sienna, were permitted to retain their republican governments. Gonzaga was left in possession of Mantua, with his title raised from that of marquis to that of duke.

Early in the following year Pope Clement placed upon the head of Charles the crowns of Lombardy and Rome. The assumption of these crowns was but an idle ceremonial to one who was master of Italy without either. The ceremony was performed at Bologna by the very pontiff who had attempted to form the league of Italian independence.

Florence made a vain but heroic attempt to resist the imposition of the tyranny which had been bargained for by the Pope. Alessandro Medici, whose memory almost equals in vice and crime the worst of Italian tyrants, was forced upon the citizens by the Papal and Imperial arms. In the following year he entered Florence with a rescript from the emperor, fixing its constitution, and took the title of its duke.

Italy was not yet destined to be free from the miseries which French and Spanish contests inflicted

on her people. The Duke of Milan died in 1535. The emperor claimed the duchy as reverting to the imperial crown on the death of his feudatory without heirs. Francis alleged that it was his by inheritance, and that he had only given up his rights during the life of the reigning duke. After nine years' war, the peace of Crespi left the emperor in possession of Milan. In the interim the French king had used the opportunity to seize on a large proportion of the Italian possessions of his relative, the Duke of Savoy.

Once more the flames of war between France and Spain were kindled by an attempt of the emperor to deprive of his dominions, the newly created Duke of Parma.

Pope Paul III. had severed the territories of Parma and Placentia from the possessions of the Church. The College of Cardinals had sanctioned the alienation in favour of the natural son of the Pontiff. The emperor was induced to sanction the assumption of the territorial title of duke. An attempt on the part of the succeeding Pontiff and the emperor to resume this grant, led to an appeal from the young Duke of Parma to the protection of France.

Before this contest closed, the Emperor Charles had abdicated his crown, and the imbecile, but cruel fanatic Philip II., succeeded to his Italian dominions. Strange to say, the Pope was the great opponent of that most bigoted and blindest of the devotees of the power of the Church. The Pontiff appealed to Henry II. of France, to join him in a league to drive the Spanish power out of Italy. The Duke of Guise crossed the Alps with

20,000 men, and marched without resistance to Rome. Entering the territory of Naples, he was met by the Duke of Alva with an equal army, but before any engagement took place, the victory of the Spaniards at St. Quentin recalled the Duke to protect the frontiers of France. In three years afterwards, the treaty of Château Cambresis at last gave peace to Italy. It made little alteration in the position of the Italian states, with the exception of extinguishing one more republic, by assigning Sienna to the Duke of Florence. The King of Spain reserved for himself from the territories of the extinct republic, a small maritime district called the "State of the Garrisons," which remained attached to the kingdom of Naples, up to the period of the French revolution.

It was during these wars that Piedmont endured the terrible evil of the successive occupations of hostile armies. Nearly related to both the contending monarchs, the unhappy Duke of Savoy was alternately robbed of his possessions by each. Nothing was left to him at one period except the county of Nice, and so complete was the desolation of the plain of Piedmont, that Charles V. had contemplated turning over it the waters of the Po and the Ticino, so as to place an impassable and pestilential marsh between Italy and French arms.

The peace of Château Cambresis, almost all Italian writers concur, in fixing, as the period of the subjugation of their country to foreign rule. It completed, indeed, the extinction of its liberties. We are no more to meet with the fierce struggles for popular freedom,

nor even the determined contests for principles of public right, which marked the earlier days of Italy. The revolts against fiscal oppression, which once or twice disturbed the despotism of Spain at Naples or Palermo, hardly rise to the dignity of insurrections in the cause of freedom ; and during two centuries the nation appeared to sink down into an inglorious and tame acquiescence in the tyranny by which it was oppressed.

That tyranny was not, however, altogether foreign. In the southern portion of the Peninsula, in the fairest province of the north, at Naples, and at Milan, the blight of Spanish oppression withered the energies of the people. But in other parts of Italy, Italian princes reigned, who inherited the vices without the energy of their families. The Italians, in this long interval of degradation, paid the penalty of the crimes of the preceding age.

The greatness, even in one sense the glory, of these cities had not ceased with the destruction of their liberties. The impulse given to human energies by free institutions survived the institutions themselves ; and while Italy was sinking into slavery, it preserved for a time its ascendancy, not only in material greatness, but in literature, in science, and in art. With the extinction of free government, intellect and genius appeared to seek new channels for their exercise, instead of the closed one of a political career. Republican freedom in Tuscany existed for years after liberty was extinguished in Lombardy, but even Florence might be said to have outlived her free and happy days at the time when Dante was driven from her walls by a sentence that

condemned him to the flames. He died at Verona, under the protection of its lord. The "Divina Commedia" peoples its lowest hell with flatterers, tyrants, and traitors—the characters of the falling age of Italy. Petrarch and Boccaccio were of still later years. Tasso wrote his immortal poem in the dungeon in which the tyrant of Ferrara had confined him.

It was in the days of the decline of Italian freedom that Europe owed to Italy the restoration of ancient learning. Petrarch and Boccaccio gave the first impulse to the movement ; nearly a century later the fugitives who escaped from the fall of Constantinople, brought to the schools and universities, with which Italy abounded, the taste for the writings and language of ancient Greece. Thus, as her liberties were passing away, Italy held out the lamp of learning to Europe. It is false to say that she owed this in any sense to the voluptuous and vicious lords who ruled her cities and her lands. Her literature breathes the energies and the impulses of freedom ; her schools and her universities were the creation of her earlier and nobler age ; and Florence, where the forms of freedom longest survived, produced in the very last years of her liberties the most illustrious of those whose genius made Italian literature and learning the source from which other countries drew their inspiration.

The revival of art we must also trace back to the spirit that originated in free institutions, although the effect was manifested in the period of their decline. Architecture, indeed, produced many of its noblest temples in the palmy days of Italian freedom. Painting

and sculpture, which are supposed especially to depend upon the patronage of courts, have always best flourished in nations which had at least the memories and the aspirations of freedom. It is in the cities which still preserved the forms of republican government, that we find the greatest of the names which are associated with their revival.

It must still be admitted that the glory of Italy, as the teacher of Europe in learning, in literature, and in art, marked the period of her political and social decline. That glory would, after all, ill-compensate for the miseries and degradation that were at the same time attending her fall. Voluptuous and licentious races of sovereigns ruled in most of her states. In the 15th century the corruption of Italian manners was extreme. The example of their rulers had demoralised the upper classes. These were the days of the assassinations and the poisonings which have been, with such cruel injustice, attributed to all generations of Italians.

The virtual subjection of Italy to Charles V., suppressed for ever the factions that had ruined the cause of its freedom. But their extinction could not restore the liberty and the virtues they had destroyed. From the peace of Château Cambresis to the war of the Spanish Succession, nearly two centuries passed over Italy, during which, in Savoy and Venice alone, were there any manifestations of manliness or strength.

The dominion of Spain had its effect even in those parts of Italy to which it did not directly extend. The foreign nobles, who represented the sovereigns of

Madrid, imported into Italy the sentiments and the maxims of Castilian pride. Trade and commerce, which hitherto had been held honourable employments not derogatory to the dignity of princes, began, according to the ignorant prejudices of the Spanish nobility, to be looked upon with disdain. The younger sons of Italian families of distinction no longer condescended to seek useful occupation in mercantile pursuits. They gradually grew up into an idle and privileged class, without property sufficient to maintain their rank, and with a rank too high to permit them usefully to earn their bread. To the existence of such a class, arising from the importation of the Spanish presumption of birth, well-informed writers have not hesitated to trace the depravity of domestic manners which at last recognised as a social institution, the usage which gave to every married lady the strange privilege of her "cavalier serviente."

During this period imperial power had become a mere name. Charles V. was the last German emperor who thought it worth his while to ask coronation either at Milan or at Rome. Disputes with the Pope as to some of the forms are stated to have led to the abandonment of the practice. But in truth the neglect of the form was the most emphatic proof that the reality was gone. Every German emperor still called himself elected King of the Romans, but he exercised no authority in Rome. The Papal See had long been independent of imperial control. The magistrates of Rome continued to take the oath of fidelity to the Pope, and not to the emperor. From the days of Rudolph

the Pontiff was, to all intents, the independent sovereign of the Roman States.

In other parts of Italy, the authority of the emperor was reduced to the barest assertion of a feudal right, which was little more than reversionary in its nature. The attempt to dispose of Mantua, as a lapsed fief, by Ferdinand, in 1627, led only to a signal failure. The privilege of recognising changes in the titles of the princes, was the only right of sovereignty which was left to the prerogative of imperial power.

The authority of the Papacy had also fallen. It was not alone that the Reformation had detached from it a large portion of Europe. The personal character of the Popes partook, perhaps in a lesser degree, of the general deterioration of the Italian princes. The successors of Leo X. were weak and luxurious, although not vicious princes. Their authority was lowered in the minds of the people. A polite and indolent scepticism had spread its poison throughout society. The clergy had not escaped the contagion of the general demoralisation. More than all this, the Papal power was no longer the advocate of popular rights—it was not, as of yore, supported by that fierce spirit of municipal freedom which had been, in its early struggles, the source of its real strength. The days had long passed, when the popular election of the Pontiffs made, in truth, a struggle for Papal privilege, a contest for the rights of the Roman democracy in the person of one who, though consecrated to a sacred office, was still an elected magistrate of the People. The progress of the Reformed doctrines had increased the alienation from

popular sympathies, which began with the election of the Popes by a close clerical conclave. Those doctrines had become identified with the cause of free opinion, and of liberty itself. In invoking against them the aid of the secular power, the Church appealed to the despotism of kings. Princes interfered to suppress Protestantism, not from zeal for Roman orthodoxy, but because dissent from the established religion of the country was an offence against their own supreme power. The position of the Pontiffs was reversed since the days when Hildebrand did battle for the rights of the Church. The Church was now the ally of kings. In that alliance it submitted to a slavery, to which their enmity had never reduced it. The successor of the Pontiffs, who had hurled at emperors their haughty missives of excommunication, was compelled, for the first time in the history of the Papacy, to send an ambassador to offer an apology to an earthly king. Louis XIV. had insisted on a Pope submitting to this humiliation.¹⁵ Even before the days of Charles V., Ferdinand, the Spanish monarch who bore pre-eminently the title of the Catholic King—who would have tortured and burned any of his subjects who dared to doubt the smallest particle of the Church's creed—threatened to hang the Pope's messenger who brought a Papal bull into Naples without his leave.¹⁶ The Roman Church was already made to feel that dependence upon princes

¹⁵ James's *Life of Louis XIV.*, vol. ii. p. 125.

¹⁶ In the year 1508, Ferdinand II. thus wrote to his viceroy at Naples upon hearing that a Papal messenger had brought a bull into that kingdom without royal permission:—

“ We are equally surprised and displeased with you that you likewise have

which many years after was complete ; when, at the bidding of European potentates, she elected a Pope for the express purpose of destroying that Order, the professors of which had been the most zealous and the most efficient supporters of the loftiest pretensions of the Papal See.

Throughout all Italy, when once the spread of Protestantism was effectually suppressed by the high hand of persecution, when imperial power had finally abandoned its claims upon Rome, and Italy had sunk in indolent acquiescence under the sovereignties which had finally established themselves upon the ruins of her freedom, there was scarcely a public question or a public principle to trouble the luxurious repose of human thought. Religion had degenerated into formalities, which, in the hands of a clergy not very austere in their own manners, imposed but little control upon the laity. Open dissent from the established creeds was suppressed by a strong and a vigorous severity, but everything was tolerated that kept within the limits of a decent adherence to ceremonies and forms. The bold crimes of preceding centuries gave way to a lazy profligacy, that seemed destitute of

not resorted to violent means, and sent to the gallows the messenger who presented you that brief. * * *

* * * " You must use all possible diligence to seize the messenger if he be still in the same kingdom ; if you can get hold of him, he must retract the presentation which he made you of the brief, and renounce it by a formal act, after which you will have him immediately hanged."—*Letter of Ferdinand II. to the Neapolitan Deputy, May 22nd, 1508.*

The history of the severe laws passed in almost every country in Europe upon this subject—laws breathing in their language but little respect for the pretensions of the Holy See—will be found in a Report of the Committee of the House of Commons in 1816.—*Parliamentary Papers, 1816.*

energy enough for the production even of startling guilt. The subjects had not either virtue or spirit enough to be shocked by the vices of their rulers. Mantua was content to be fleeced by taxation to support the pleasures of a prince, who spent his time at the carnivals and in the dissipations of Venice, and whose conduct provoked the not very censorious rulers of the republic to forbid, by a special law, any of the nobility associating with him. Florence submitted to a succession of weak and profligate Medici, whose vices were not redeemed by the patronage which they extended to art. The sovereignties that had been, in most instances, won by crime, appeared to be destined to perish by vice ; and in the beginning of the eighteenth century, we find more than one reigning Italian family dying out, of inanition, from the combined effects of debauchery and sloth.

Such were the effects which civil discord and foreign invasion had produced upon the social condition of the country. Comparing the progress of Italy with that of other countries, it is impossible not to see that the evils of this wretched period are to be traced to the want of unity in its states. The nominal headship of the German monarchs was powerful enough to prevent any real consolidation of the Italian states. The influence of the Papal power was always sufficient to neutralise the reality of the imperial control. In almost all other countries the process had been going on of uniting into one monarchy the divided elements of national strength. England had long since moulded her heptarchy into one kingdom. Castile, and Navarre, and Aragon, had

merged in the great dominion of Spain. France had united Normandy and Aquitaine and her other provinces, under one crown. In Germany separate states continued to exist, but they were united under a national confederation that bound them into one. In Italy alone there was neither monarchy or confederation. The diets of Roncaglia had long since been abandoned by the Teutonic princes, who made the decrees of the German assembly binding on Italy. The combination of the Lombard league had been dissolved, and every attempt to form a new confederation had failed. While the natural process which seemed frequently on the point of accomplishing in Italy, as in other countries, the consolidation into one central dynasty of the elements of national strength, had been as frequently interrupted by the operation of the peculiar circumstances in which the country was placed.

From the peace of Château Cambresis, there is nothing deserving of notice in Italian history which will not better find its place in the sketch of the particular state in which the few incidents that are worthy of record occurred. At the close of the 18th century the French revolution broke up the system under which Italy had groaned, involved her again in the general struggle of a European war, and finally made her soil the subject of a disposition in which the general consent of Europe attempted by a new territorial distribution to provide for her security and peace.

Although the war of the Spanish Succession, and the

contests to which it led, are familiar to every student of European history, the influence which the arrangements consequent upon them exercised upon Italy, will excuse, perhaps make necessary, a very brief statement of their origin and result.

Charles II. of Spain, the descendant of the eldest branch of the House of Hapsburgh, died without issue, on the 1st of November, 1700. By his will he left his dominion to his grandson Philip, the second son of the dauphin of France. Tempted by the splendour of the bequest, Louis XIV. deserted an alliance which he had previously formed, which laid down very different rules for the succession to the vast territories of Spain. His grandson, under the title of Philip V., assumed the crown of that magnificent empire which included Spain and her colonies in America—the Netherlands, the two Sicilies, and the Duchy of Milan.

The Emperor Leopold disputed the claim of Philip to these dominions. The title of the emperor consisted in his being the direct male descendant of Charles V. European statesmen adopting the theory of the balance of power, said by some to have been borrowed from the policy of the Italian states,¹⁷ saw danger to the liberties of Europe in the possible union of these great dominions with the crown of France. To oppose the pretensions of Philip, was formed that confederation known in history as the Grand Alliance in which England,

¹⁷ The republic of Florence is said to have the merit of devising the political theory of the balance of power.—*Sismondi, Italian Republics.*

Lord Brougham correctly observes that the policy is of much older date. It originated with the republics of Greece.—*Political Philosophy.*

Holland, and Germany, combined against France and Spain.¹⁸

In the Netherlands and Germany, the scenes of those campaigns in which Marlborough won his immortal laurels, occurred the chief events of the war that followed; but Northern Italy was also the battle-ground of contending armies. Piedmont, as usual in later time, bore the brunt of their encounter. Victor Amadeus, Duke of Savoy, allied by family ties to the Bourbons, at first espoused their cause. Subsequently he joined that of the Grand Alliance. His territory was occupied by the French. He was himself invested in his capital by a formidable army. Turin was on the point of falling when, by a strange coincidence, a prince of Savoy led the imperial troops to its rescue. Prince Eugene, who had risen in the service of Austria to command, was at the head of the army that relieved his beleaguered relative in Turin.

After disturbing Europe for thirteen years, the war of the Spanish Succession was ended by the treaty of Utrecht, an event perhaps more memorable in English history than even in that of Europe at large.¹⁹

By the provisions of this treaty, the Italian possessions of the Spanish monarchy, were annexed to the Austrian territories. The Duchy of Mantua had been declared forfeited by the rebellion of its duke against the emperor. Charles VI., the Archduke of Austria, who had

¹⁸ Martens' "*Collection des Traités de paix.*" "*Recueil des Traités.*"

¹⁹ Treaty of Utrecht, March 5th, 1713; Martens; Koch et Schoell.—*Histoire des Traités de paix.* The emperor and the King of Spain were not parties to this treaty, but gave their assent to its main provisions by a treaty entered into at Rastadt in the following year.

succeeded his brother Joseph in the imperial crown, was by this treaty awarded the province of Naples, the garrison districts in Tuscany, and the duchies of Mantua and Milan. Of these latter he ceded a portion to the Duke of Savoy, who thus acquired the district which once formed the Marquisate of Montferrat, and portions of the Milanese duchy which extended the frontier of Piedmont to the Ticino. The most brilliant, if not the most important, acquisition of Victor Amadeus, was that of the island of Sicily, of which he assumed the government, with the title of its king.

The peace which it promised did not last. Philip, King of Spain, was by this arrangement excluded from Italy. Philip had been first married to a daughter of Victor Amadeus. His second wife was Elizabeth Farnese, a lady of the Italian family, for whom the Duchy of Parma had been created by the Pope.²⁰ The crown of Spain was settled on her step-son. For her own child the ambitious queen desired the honours of a crown. Cardinal Alberoni, a reckless and ambitious ecclesiastic, was the minister of the Spanish court. Under his advice and instigated by the queen, Philip claimed the possessions in Italy, which in the days of

²⁰ Parma and Placentia had been the possessions of the Holy See. In 1545, Pope Paul III., a pontiff of the noble family of the Farnese, formally obtained from the consistory an assent to the alienation of these territories in favour of his son, Peter Luigi Farnese.

The emperor assented to the erection of these provinces into a Duchy, and the descendants of Peter Luigi were Dukes of Parma until the extinction of the direct line of the family in 1734.

“Paul III. was the last of those ambitious pontiffs who devoted the intrigues of the Roman court to the elevation of their relations to sovereign power, and who were suffered to dismember the States of the Church in favour of their own families.”—*Perceval*, chap. ix.

his grandfather had belonged to the Spanish crown. When his title to that crown was admitted, he denied the right of the other powers of Europe to alienate from it its possessions. This was not all : in right of his queen he claimed the duchies of Parma and of Tuscany. She determined to recover for him all the Italian possessions of the Spanish crown, and to add to them the duchies of Parma and Tuscany. The Duke of Parma was old and childless. The extinction of the reigning line of the Medici was near. Cosmo di Medici, the reigning sovereign, was old. His only son, Jean Gaston, was not likely to leave heirs. To Parma Elizabeth advanced her claims as heiress of the family of Farnese ; to Tuscany she asserted a more questionable title in right of a descent from the family of Medici. These duchies she demanded for her son, Don Carlos, in whose behalf she was ready to waive her own claims.

The success of these demands would have given to the Spanish monarchy even greater power than it had before enjoyed. To Naples, Sicily, and Milan, would have been added the territories of Parma and Tuscany. All Europe denounced the ambitious projects of Alberoni as entirely inconsistent with that balance of power, which it had then become a political superstition to uphold. Philip's French relatives were determined in opposition to his claims ; and to resist them the quadruple alliance was formed between Holland, England, France, and the emperor.²¹ The parties to this alliance offered to the Spanish Bourbons that the emperor should settle on Don Carlos the reversion to the duchies

²¹ Martens.

of Parma and Tuscany on their lapsing to him by the failure of the reigning families without heirs. These proposals were rejected,²² and it was not until the Spanish court found the combination of four powerful monarchs too strong for them, that they reluctantly acceded to the terms of the Quadruple Alliance, and accepted for Don Carlos the promised reversion of Parma and Tuscany.

To induce the emperor to accede to this arrangement the Duke of Savoy was compelled to surrender to him his newly-acquired kingdom of Sicily, receiving instead the island of Sardinia with its kingly title. It is as kings of Sardinia that the princes of Savoy have since been known in European history.

The treaty of the quadruple alliance was thus the second by which at this period the European powers attempted to arrange the affairs of Italy. This treaty left the house of Austria in possession of Sicily and Naples. It was assented to by Spain in 1720. European complications unconnected with Italy produced new wars and a new treaty ; and the treaty of Seville in 1724, followed by one entered into at Vienna two years later, confirmed Don Carlos in the duchy of Parma, of which, on the death of the last of the Farnese in 1734, he entered into possession.

A dispute as to the election of a king of Poland gave the Spanish court an opportunity of once more attempting the resumption of the Neapolitan dominions. Don Carlos, the second son of Philip and Elizabeth, was now just grown to manhood. His father placed

in his hand the sword which he himself had received from Louis XIV. Don Carlos was but seventeen years old when he took possession of his sovereignty of Parma. In the same year he was called from it to invade the Sicilian dominions of Austria. He conquered in succession the continental territories, and the island of Sicily ; and on the 15th of June, 1734, he was proclaimed as King of the Two Sicilies.

The war of the Polish Succession was ended in the following year by a peace, the preliminaries of which were signed at Vienna.²³ In this treaty an entirely new arrangement of Italian affairs was introduced. The rights of Don Carlos to the kingdoms of Naples and Sicily were recognised. Parma was surrendered to the emperor ; and, lastly, the duchy of Tuscany was disposed of to a new claimant for the honours of an Italian prince.

Francis, Duke of Lorraine, had married Maria Theresa, the only daughter of the Emperor Charles VI. In the arrangement by which the Polish dispute was compromised, Stanislaus, one of the competitors for the crown of Poland received the duchy of Lorraine for his life. For the surrender of his hereditary estates, which were finally to revert to France, the husband of Maria Theresa was compensated by receiving the reversion of the grand-duchy of Tuscany. A stipulation was annexed that no descendant of his, who should succeed to the hereditary possessions of the House of Austria, should at the same time rule over the Tuscan States.

²³ Martens. "Recueil des Traités."

A new cause of contention soon arose. Charles VI. died in October, 1740. In his person the male line of the great House of Hapsburgh became extinct. In his lifetime he had ordained a Pragmatic Sanction or family law, by which all his hereditary possessions were settled on his daughter. To this arrangement he had obtained the consent of the powers who had been parties to the Treaty of Seville. Yet soon after his death his daughter found herself assailed in her possessions by a formidable coalition. A fourth war ensued, which was ended in 1749 by the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle.²⁴

This treaty confirmed the previous arrangements in relation to Sicily, Naples, and Tuscany. The duchy of Parma was settled on Don Philip, a younger son of Elizabeth Farnese; and the restless ambition of the Queen of Spain was at last satisfied by seeing her eldest son upon the throne of Sicily and Naples, her younger child enjoying the hereditary possessions of her own family,

Thus, in the course of these contests, we find four successive treaties disposing of the provinces of Italy in four different ways. Each of them was less favourable to Austria than its predecessor. By the first all the Italian possessions of the Spanish monarchy were settled on the German descendants of Charles V.; the second still preserved this arrangement, but gave to the descendants of the Queen of Spain the reversions of Parma and Tuscany, of which otherwise the emperor would have had the disposal. The third took from Austria the magnificent possessions of Sicily and Naples,

²⁴ Martens.

returning to her only the duchy of Parma. The fourth and last disposed even of this, and left nothing to Austria in Italy except the duchies of Milan and Mantua. Although the grand-duchy of Tuscany was settled on the family of Hapsburgh Lorraine, every precaution was taken to prevent that province from being united with the German possessions of their house.

The arrangements of the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle continued, up to the period of the French Revolution, undisturbed.

Those arrangements, although the result of a compromise of the interests and ambitions of rival statesmen, were not, considering the previous state of Italy, unfavourable to the cause of Italian independence. Piedmont, already recognised as the protector of Italian nationality, gained not only in rank, but in substantial territory, by the acquisition of the island of Sardinia, still more by that of the High Novarese, and by extending her frontier to the Ticino. Naples, and Sicily, were released from the tyranny of viceroys, and placed under a resident king, with a stipulation, to secure their future independence, that they never should be united to the Spanish crown. The Austrian possessions were limited to a portion of the Milanese, and the duchy of Mantua. These possessions were isolated. Switzerland and Venice interposed their territories between the Italian and the Tyrolese dominions of the arch-ducal house. Three of the antient republics, Genoa, Lucca, and Venice, were still preserved. Parma, although passing to a prince of foreign family, was conferred upon him as the representative and heir of the

Italian owners of that principality. Tuscany alone was avowedly transferred to a stranger, but this was done under colour at least of a long-admitted imperial right, and an effort was made to secure in future to the grand-duchy an Italian prince, by the stipulation that it never should be held by the successor to the hereditary possessions of the Archdukes of Austria.

In the forty-five years which elapsed between the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle and the French revolution, Italy enjoyed a perfect and an uninterrupted peace. In some, at least, of its principalities its progress in prosperity and in legislation was rapid. Naples and Sicily, under the government of Charles III., and, subsequently, under the regency of his minister, Tanucci, were ruled with energy and prudence. Tuscany prospered under the sway of the princes of Lorraine. Milan and Mantua were mildly governed by the Austrian court ; and Lombardy rose from the misery to which the exactions of Spanish viceroys had reduced even the great resources of that rich and fertile province. In the other Italian States at least no change had taken place for the worse. Industry everywhere flourished under the presence of the most essential of all blessings—peace.

During these years of peace and prosperity, the minds of men in Italy and elsewhere, were preparing for that great revolution which was so soon to convulse Europe. The licentious scepticism of the preceding century had been confirmed by, or rather given place to, the intellectual infidelity of the philosophers of France. Sovereigns, who did not foresee the effect

upon themselves, made a fashion of encouraging in reference to religion the latitudinarian opinions of Voltaire. There was neither zeal nor energy in the clergy to counteract the prevailing irreligion of the age. The opinions of the encyclopædists had made their way across the Alps, and Italy had imbibed those speculative doctrines, which in undermining the authority of revelation, shook that of all social institutions.

Causes of a different nature were producing in Italy another class of effects. The history and literature of their own country were become the study of Italians. The elaborate work of Muratori had placed within access of all readers the knowledge of their country's annals. Works on political economy, and on the philosophy of politics, discussed questions relating to the very foundation of government, as well as the practical administration of the resources of a state. Dramatic literature and dramatic representations began to be revived. Whatever be its merits or its defects in other respects, the politics of the stage must always be on the side of freedom. The tragedies of Alfieri were received with an enthusiasm to which their dramatic merits scarcely entitled them. Dante was read for his political lessons even more than for his matchless poetry. But the questions of politics and political jurisprudence were those which had taken hold of the Italian mind. The number of works upon these subjects which issued from the Italian press within the fifty years before the French revolution, almost surpasses belief. Essays on the corn laws, printed at Milan about the year 1780, anticipated many, if not all, of the

arguments in favour of free trade. A chair of political economy was instituted in the University of Naples at least seventy years before a British university tolerated such an innovation ; and by many of the Italian jurists the principles of government were examined with an ability and a boldness that would have done honour to Blackstone or to Locke.

While inquiries and discussions of this nature directed the thoughts of the Italians to principles of liberty—their history, their literature, and their drama all carried them back to the past greatness and freedom of their own country. There was thus formed in Italy that which may be termed a national mind, trained to the discussion of political questions, and educated in feelings of patriotic attachment to their native land. To the teaching of the years of the latter half of the last century we trace the implanting, or rather revival, of that irresistible passion for freedom and independence which has ever since marked the character of the Italian people.

Such had been the silent and unobserved progress of political knowledge and feeling in Italy, when the invasion of revolutionary France burst like a tornado on its plains. What might have been the effect had Italy been left to work out her own regeneration, it is not possible to tell. It may be said with certainty, that the cause of liberty would not have been stained by crimes like those, the commission of which in France flung back the march of human freedom for half a century at least. Her destiny was otherwise arranged. Italy was once more to be the battle-field of contending

European powers. The armies of France and Austria met upon her plains. Within less than ten years from the entry of the armies of the republic, all Italy was divided, as we have seen, between the provinces of the French empire—a kingdom in the north, which bearing the name of Italian, was really another great department of France—and a realm in the south, whose sovereign ruled it as the nominee and delegate of the great conqueror, who had thus reduced the entire Peninsula to subjection to himself.

This was not accomplished without producing upon the Italian character effects which have been justly described as a revolution. The campaigns of Napoleon inflamed the people with the passion for military glory. The principles of the French republic stimulated that desire for freedom and independence, which the course of Italian thought had already created. In the first few years of the revolutionary war the change was visible in all those external indications which mark the habits of a nation. The military dress became the fashion, replacing the former graceful but effeminate costume. Instead of dangling at the feet of ladies, young men spent their mornings in the riding schools their afternoons with a drilling master. The playthings of childhood were no longer baby-houses and shows—but files of tiny soldiers; with which infant generals amused themselves in representing the evolutions of Austrians and French. Even the street shows exhibited the alteration in the national mind. The street melodrama, the Italian Punch and Judy, of the eighteenth century, represented a tame but witty Italian beaten by

a very large and very tyrannical captain, either Austrian or French, whose blows he retaliated by repartee. This once popular representation was no longer tolerated in the streets, and the itinerant showmen were compelled to reverse the old plot of their simple drama, and make the Italian defeat the foreigner in blows and bravery as completely as he had always done in wit.²³

The popular ballads and music marked the change of feeling in the same way. The song of the troubadour gave way to patriotic hymns, and for the soft notes of the melody that breathed of love were now substituted the inspiring strains of martial airs.

With the advent of the French revolution, it appeared as if Italy awoke from a luxurious and enervating repose. The earlier triumphs of the republican armies had kindled fierce passions and excited lofty hopes. Liberty and independence became sacred watchwords to men who felt at last that they had a country destined to be free. Much as subsequent events may have disappointed these feelings, that disappointment was not able altogether to extinguish the enthusiasm which the excitement of those early days had kindled.

From this rapid and imperfect sketch of that early history upon which volumes might be, and have been, written, without exhausting the interest of its materials, we must turn to the task of tracing the fortunes of the

²³ *Memoirs of Napoleon.*

Italian States, which the settlement of 1814 restored to the former rulers of the land.

Our attention is first directed to that Principality of Piedmont whose sovereigns appear destined to bear the most distinguished and important part in the future history of the Italian race.

EMPERORS OF THE WEST,

FROM THE DAYS OF CHARLEMAGNE.

Those marked thus * received coronation from the Pope.

CARLOVINGIAN RACE.

	A.D.
*Charlemagne	800
*Louis I.	813
*Lothaire	817
*Louis II.	850
*Charles II.	876
*Charles Le Gros	880

Deposition of Charles, and separation
of Italy and Germany 888

Followed by a period generally called the Interregnum of the Empire, in which three sovereigns often claimed the throne of Italy, while not unfrequently two of them claimed to be emperors, each of the rival candidates for the imperial dignity, having received coronation from the Pope.

KINGS OF ITALY.

	A.D.
*Berengarius I. ¹	888
*Guido ¹	889
*Lambert ¹	892
*Arnolph ¹	896
*Louis III. ¹	901

¹ Muratori is followed in thus arranging the reigns of contemporaneous

KINGS OF ITALY—(*continued*).

	A.D.
Rodolph	921
Hugo of Provence	926
Lothaire	931
Berengarius II.	950
Adalbert	950

REUNION OF GERMANY AND ITALY.

SAXON LINE.

	A.D.
*Otho I.	952
*Otho II.	973
*Otho III.	983
*Henry II.	1024

FRANCONIAN LINE.

*Conrad II. (the Salic)	1024
*Henry III.	1039
*Henry IV.	1056
*Henry V.	1106
*Lothaire	1125

HOUSE OF HOHENSTAUFFEN.

	A.D.
*Conrad III.	1138
*Frederick I. (Barbarossa)	1155
*Henry VI.	1191
*Otho IV.	1200
*Frederick II.	1220
Conrad IV.	1250

and rival sovereigns. While his four competitors, Guido, Lambert, Arnolph, and Louis, successively obtained coronation from Popes, Berenger maintained himself as King of Italy against them. In 915 Louis, the last of his rivals, was deposed and Berenger crowned emperor at Rome.

INTERREGNUM.

William of Holland	1254
Richard Earl of Cornwall . . .	1257
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Rudolph of Hapsburgh	1273
Adolphus of Nassau	1292
Albert of Austria	1298
*Henry VII.	1308
Louis IV.	1328
*Charles IV.	1346
Wenceslaus	1378
Robert	1400
*Sigismund	1410

HOUSE OF HAPSBURGH.

Albert II.	1438
*Frederick III.	1440
Maximilian	1493
*Charles V.	1519
Ferdinand I.	1558
Maximilian II.	1564
Rodolph II.	1576
Matthias	1612
Ferdinand II.	1619
Ferdinand III.	1637
Leopold I.	1658
Joseph I.	1705
Charles VI.	1711
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Charles VII.	1742

HOUSE OF LORRAINE.

Francis I.	1745
Joseph II.	1765
Leopold II.	1790
Francis II.	1792
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Abdication of Francis	1806
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TABULAR STATEMENT (No. I.)

Of the Divisions of Italy as settled after the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle. 17.

According to the arrangements sanctioned by that treaty, and which continued undisturbed to the period of the French Revolution, Italy was divided into twelve political divisions.

I.

Piedmont, or the Italian possessions of the King of Sardinia.—They were extended by that treaty to the banks of the Ticino, thus gaining a portion of the Milanese Duchy which had previously belonged to the house of Hapsburgh. Sardinia acquired also the district of the High Novarese. Her frontier to the east was the same as it was afterwards left by the treaty of 1815.

II.

The republic of Genoa, whose territories extended along the gulf that bears its name, from the principality of Monaco close to the county of Nice to Spezzia on the south, occupying the narrow tract of land which lies between the mountains and the sea.

III.

The small, but independent principality of Monaco, occupying a promontory on the west of the Genoese territories.

IV.

A portion of the Duchy of Milan and the Duchy of Mantua constituted the Italian provinces of the House of Austria. These possessions consisted of little more than a narrow tract extending from the southern point of the Lake of Como along the Sardinian frontier, and thence along the northern bank of the Po, to a point a few miles east of the fortress of Mantua. They extended a very few miles to the northwest of Milan. Of the districts which afterwards formed the largest portion of Austrian Lombardy, lying

between Milan and the Alps and the Mincio,—the Valteline was a part of the Swiss confederation—Bergamo and Brescia were Venetian territories.

The small portion of Italian territory thus left in the possession of Austria was isolated from the rest of the Austrian dominions, being surrounded on all sides by the lands of independent States.

V.

The republic of Venice.—The territories of the republic included all the provinces of Venetia, together with Brescia and Bergamo in Lombardy. The possessions of the republic extended from the river Adda and the western shore of the Lake of Como to the Adriatic. The Austrian possessions interposed on the south between her territories and the Po.

VI.

The Duchy of Parma conferred upon a younger branch of the Spanish Bourbons.

VII.

The Duchy of Modena still remaining in the possession of the last representative of the House of Este. By marriage to his only daughter the sovereignty passed to an Austrian arch-duke.

VIII.

The republic of Lucca.—The population of the districts belonging to this republic amounted to about 178,000.

IX.

The Grand Duchy of Tuscany.

X.

The States of the Church.

XI.

The Republic of San Marino.

XII.

The kingdoms of Naples and Sicily.

TABULAR STATEMENT No. II.

Principal events connected with the progress of French dominion in Italy during the Revolutionary Wars.

1792. September 21.—Savoy invested by the armies of the republic.

November 27.—Savoy incorporated with France ; Nice and Monaco incorporated with France.

1796.—Napoleon's first Italian campaign.

May 15.—King of Sardinia compelled to sign a treaty of alliance with France. Nice, Savoy, and Western Piedmont, formally ceded to France.

1797. February 15.—Treaty of Tolentino between France and the Pope by which the Pope formally ceded Bologna, Ferrara, and the entire of Romagna.

April.—Ligurian republic established at Genoa.

April 18.—Preliminary articles of peace concluded at Leoben between France and Austria, by which it was arranged that the territories of the Venetian terra-firma should be ceded to Austria. Venice being indemnified by receiving the Roman Legations.

June 26.—Leghorn seized by Murat.

June 27.—Establishment of the Cisalpine Republic, including in its territories, Lombardy, Modena, and Bologna.

October 17.—Treaty of Campo Formio, by which Venice and part of her States were given over to Austria; all the Romagnese and the Venetian territory to the Adige annexed to the dominions of the Cisalpine republic.

1798. February 10.—Capture of Rome. The Pope carried prisoner.

Establishment of the Roman Republic.

1799. January 23.—Naples seized. Proclamation of the Parthenopean republic.

Reverses of the French arms. Victories of Suwarrow in Northern Italy. Restoration of Ferdinand in Naples. Rome occupied by Neapolitan troops. Turin occupied by Russian troops.

1800. June 5.—Surrender of Genoa to Lord Keith and the Austrians.

June 14.—Battle of Marengo.

Reconquest by Napoleon of Northern Italy.

Reorganisation of Cisalpine and Ligurian republics.

1800. February 9.—Treaty of Luneville. The Grand Duke ceded Tuscany to the Duke of Parma.

1801. Kingdom of Etruria established. Don Louis appointed king.

1805. March 17.—Kingdom of Italy proclaimed. Eugene Beauharnais viceroy.

May 26.—Coronation of Napoleon at Milan.

June 26.—Lucca erected into a principality under Napoleon's sister Eliza.

1805. June 9.—Incorporation of the Ligurian Republic with France.

1805. December 27.—Peace of Presburg. Venetian territories added to the kingdom of Italy. All the French occupations in Italy recognised.

October.—Ancona occupied by French troops.

December 26.—Proclamation of Napoleon from Presburg declaring that the dynasty of Naples had ceased to reign.

1806. February 14.—Seizure of Naples by the French.

March 31.—Joseph Buonaparte proclaimed King of Naples.

1807. December 10.—Kingdom of Etruria incorporated with France.

1808. Rome occupied by the French army under General Miollis.

April 2.—The Papal States of Ancona, Urbino, Macerata and Camerina annexed to the kingdom of Italy.

July 15.—Joachim Murat proclaimed King of Naples.

1809. May 17.—Edict from Schönbrunn annexing the States of the Church to the French empire. Rome declared an imperial and free city.

July 5.—Pope seized and carried a prisoner into France.

1809. October 14.—Treaty of peace at Vienna between Austria and France.

European powers. The armies of France and Austria met upon her plains. Within less than ten years from the entry of the armies of the republic, all Italy was divided, as we have seen, between the provinces of the French empire—a kingdom in the north, which bearing the name of Italian, was really another great department of France—and a realm in the south, whose sovereign ruled it as the nominee and delegate of the great conqueror, who had thus reduced the entire Peninsula to subjection to himself.

This was not accomplished without producing upon the Italian character effects which have been justly described as a revolution. The campaigns of Napoleon inflamed the people with the passion for military glory. The principles of the French republic stimulated that desire for freedom and independence, which the course of Italian thought had already created. In the first few years of the revolutionary war the change was visible in all those external indications which mark the habits of a nation. The military dress became the fashion, replacing the former graceful but effeminate costume. Instead of dangling at the feet of ladies, young men spent their mornings in the riding schools their afternoons with a drilling master. The playthings of childhood were no longer baby-houses and shows—but files of tiny soldiers; with which infant generals amused themselves in representing the evolutions of Austrians and French. Even the street shows exhibited the alteration in the national mind. The street melodrama, the Italian Punch and Judy, of the eighteenth century, represented a tame but witty Italian beaten by

a very large and very tyrannical captain, either Austrian or French, whose blows he retaliated by repartee. This once popular representation was no longer tolerated in the streets, and the itinerant showmen were compelled to reverse the old plot of their simple drama, and make the Italian defeat the foreigner in blows and bravery as completely as he had always done in wit.²³

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²³ *Memoirs of Napoleon.*

CHAPTER VI.

Return of Victor Emanuel, King of Sardinia, to Turin—Sovereigns of the House of Savoy—Humbert the White-handed—Early acquisitions of territory—Cuneo and Nice—Amadeus VIII. the first Duke of Savoy—Piedmont created into a principality—Wars of Charles V.—Piedmont ravaged—Emanuel Philibert—Transfer of government from Chambery to Turin—Character of the princes—Abdication of the first king—Election of Amadeus, the first duke, to the Papal chair—Savoy in the French revolution—Invasion by France—Cession of Piedmont and flight of the king—Turin retaken by Suwarrow—Recall of the king—Opposition of Austria—Austria demands Piedmont for herself—Battle of Marengo—Abdication of Charles Emanuel—Return of Victor Emanuel in 1814—His reactionary policy—"Viglietti reali"—Embassy to the Pope—Demand of tribute to Rome—Representations of Sardinian ministers to Lord Castlereagh—Efforts to obtain additional territory—Annexation of Genoa—Description of Genoa—Andrew Doria—Expulsion of the Austrians in 1745—Landing of Lord William Bentinck at Spezzia—Preparations for assault on Genoa—Capitulation of the French—Proclamation of Lord William Bentinck—Act of Annexation—Letter of Lord Castlereagh—Indignation in Genoa—Progress of the House of Savoy—Reflections.

SCARCELY were the Italian provinces which had been subject to Napoleon's rule placed at the disposal of the allied sovereigns, when they invited Victor Emanuel, King of Sardinia, to assume the government of the territories which had belonged to his fathers. This prince, on the abdication of his brother in 1803, received from him the almost barren honours of his crown. In the latter years of Napoleon's power he had, as has been already said, resided in the island which alone of all his dominions remained under his

sway.¹ Piedmont was a portion of the empire of France. Yet without waiting for the formal cession of the country by any representative of the French nation, the sovereigns exercised their right of conquest by restoring it to the rule of its legitimate king. On the 25th of April a proclamation from the Austrian general announced to the Piedmontese the restoration of their ancient dynasty. On the 12th of May Victor Emanuel landed at Genoa, on the 20th he made his public and triumphant entry into Turin. He was the first of the Italian princes recalled by the downfall of Napoleon, who assumed in his capital the government of his States.²

There was but little in the ancient traditions of the House of Savoy to lead to the expectation that it would fill the place in Italian affairs which in recent years it has assumed. In none of the Italian principalities were the maxims of arbitrary government more firmly established. In none was complete devotion to ecclesiastical authority more incorporated with the policy of the state. The feudal principles of the monarchy of Savoy were not the less powerful because by successive sovereigns they were administered

¹ The island of Sardinia, about one hundred and sixty miles in length and sixty in breadth, contains a population of little more than half a million of inhabitants. After the fall of the Roman Empire it was in the possession of the Saracens. In 1020 it was conquered by the Pisans. In 1325 it was wrested from the Republic of Pisa by the King of Arragon, and continued under Spanish dominion until the peace of Utrecht in 1714. By the treaty of Utrecht it was ceded to Austria, the Duke of Savoy receiving Sicily with the title of its king. In 1720 Sardinia, in exchange for Sicily, passed under the dominion of the princes of Savoy.

² The Pope returned to his dominions in March. He remained at Imola, and did not actually enter Rome until the 24th of May.

in a spirit of chivalrous generosity. Except for offences against the Church, no cruel rigours disgraced the rule of the princes of this House. In the persecutions of heretics they too faithfully represented the superstitions and the bigotry of the people ; and only added a species of religious veneration to the loyalty which attached their subjects to the descendants of an illustrious and ancient family. Of all the States of Italy, Piedmont was the last in which any one would have looked for the establishment of representative institutions and constitutional monarchy, or expected the cause of civil and religious liberty to find a shelter and a home.³

Looking back to remote history, we may say that the fortune was equally strange which has called them to be the defenders of Italian independence. In the earlier struggles for that independence we scarcely meet with their name. When we do so it is as assisting the emperors by giving them a passage through their Alpine territories. At the time when the Lombard league was doing battle against the imperial might of Frederick Barbarossa, the Princes of Savoy were silently consolidating their strength upon their Alpine hills ; and if at the battle of Legnano any one had predicted that the time would come when the armies of Italian independence would be led across that very battle-field by the descendant of the Count of Savoy who had just

³ After the events that have occurred in the interval, we read with some curiosity the expressions of dislike to the House of Savoy in which all liberal writers of the period of the Restoration indulge. They all speak with the strongest indignation on the subject of any proposal to add to the influence or power of the Sardinian State.

given passage to Frederick's German troops⁴—the prophecy would have seemed wild enough, without the addition that the princes of that House should centre all the hopes of Italian patriotism in themselves, and maintain the cause of Italian freedom when all the republics that were then so nobly contending for it had passed away.

Yet a more careful review of the history of the House of Savoy will show, that events had in reality been preparing both its princes and their people to fulfil in later times a destiny, with which the future fate of Italian liberty seems linked. The part which the Princes of Savoy have taken in Italian affairs has therefore invested with an interest disproportionate to their historic importance, the facts connected with the infancy of their race.

The general concurrence of genealogists had been in the habit of referring this family to a Saxon origin. More recent researches of Swiss and Italian antiquaries appear to have succeeded in establishing a pedigree which traces them to an Italian stock. We may accept as accurate the statement which deduces the descent of the lords of Maurienne from some of those princes who after the fall of the Carolingian dynasty, asserted their right to the title of Italian kings.⁵ It reconciles facts in their early history, which upon any other hypothesis it is not easy to understand. But whatever was the origin

⁴ Muratori "Annali D'Italia," Anno 1168.

⁵ Cibrario, in his "Storia della Monarchia de Savoia," has produced elaborate proofs of the descent of Humbert from the Marquis of Ivrea through Adalbert and Guido, kings of Italy. Litta, "Famiglie Celebri D'Italia," "Foreign Quarterly Review." vol. xxviii. p. 362.

of the founders of the House of Savoy, the district that gave them their title was their home in the days of their first appearance in authentic records. Their most ancient possessions were fiefs of the kingdom of Burgundy, and their earliest triumphs were achieved by the shores of Lake Lemman and on the banks of the Rhone.⁶

Before William the Norman ascended the throne of England they were lords of Maurienne. Chambery had been added by purchase to their possessions at a period⁷ scarcely early enough to justify the expression that it is the cradle of their race. Even at that remote period they were masters of districts on the southern slopes of the Alps, and their descendants can assert their claim to be enrolled as Italian princes in right of possessions, which have come down to them by an unbroken chain of succession for more than eight hundred years.

From the small possessions of Susa and Aosta successive acquisitions of territory extended their dominion over the best portions of Northern Italy. At the period of the French revolution, they had subjected by slow and gradual acquisitions all its districts to the west of the Ticino to their sway.

⁶ For the history of the house of Savoy see Denina "Istoria dell' Italia Occidentale," Gallenga's "History of Piedmont," Litta "Famiglie Celebri di Italia," Cibrario "Storia della Monarchia di Savoia," Costa de Beauregard "Mémoires Historiques sur La Maison royale de Savoye."

⁷ Thomas I. bought Chambery, on the 15th of May, 1232, for 32,000 solidi, in our money about 3660*l.*, from Berlion, its viscount. The castle was ceded to Amadeus V., in 1295, by the Lords de la Rochette, and it was only then that Amadeus removed thither the seat of government, which had previously been at Aiguebelle."—*Gallenga*, vol. i. p. 252.

Authentic history traces the hereditary line of the present occupant of the Sardinian throne to Humbert the White-handed, who lived in the early part of the eleventh century. In a contest for the succession of the crown of Burgundy, his command of the passes of the Alps enabled him to render to the emperor, Conrad the Salic, important services, acknowledged by grants and dignities which may be said to have established the power and founded the greatness of the House of Savoy.

About the same period, a marriage of one of the family with Adelaide, the heiress of the Counts of Turin, brought to the Lords of Savoy extensive dominions in Piedmont. They would seem to have been allotted to a younger branch of the family, who, bearing the title of Princes of Achaia, retained possession of more or less of the inheritance of Adelaide, doing homage for these territories to the Counts of Savoy. Nearly four centuries after Humbert, the line of Achaia became extinct; and in 1418, Amadeus, the first Duke of Savoy, had no difficulty in obtaining from the Emperor Sigismund the recognition of his title to succeed them by inheritance, or more properly by escheat.

In the interval which elapsed between Humbert and Amadeus, the power of the House of Savoy had been built up by a succession of bold but prudent princes. Before the addition acquired by the lapse of the fiefs of the Princes of Achaia, their possessions had extended far on the southern side of the Alps—in some instances by conquest, in others, and by much the more numerous,

by voluntary cessions of the districts which were incorporated with their dominions. In 1382, Cuneo, attracted by the wise institutions of Count Amadeus VII., had placed itself under the protection of his rule, to escape the perpetual quarrels in which it was involved with the Counts of Anjou. Six years later the free city of Nice, by the unanimous resolution of its people, desired for itself and its territory incorporation with the Italian possessions of Savoy. By this latter addition, Savoy, hitherto separated from the ocean, acquired, with the rich possessions of the county of Nice, the dignity and importance of a maritime State.

The reign of Amadeus is a memorable epoch in the history of his dynasty. In 1416 he procured from Sigismund the creation of Savoy into a duchy. A few years afterwards, he added to his new ducal title the honours of an Italian prince. When the possessions of the Princes of Achaia had lapsed, he constituted the entire of his Cisalpine territories, as they must be called in Italian annals, into a principality of Piedmont. Assuming himself the title of its count, he reserved that of prince for his eldest son—establishing for the Italian principality a separate government, of which he fixed the seat at Pinerolo on the southern side of the Alps.

From this period the sovereigns of Savoy were Italian princes. It was not, however, until many years afterwards that their power in Northern Italy was consolidated into a compact dominion. For nearly a century after the reign of Amadeus, the marquisate of Saluzzo interposed its territory in the very heart of the

Piedmontese domains. The district of Alessandria belonged to the lords of Milan ; and many of the cities acknowledged but a doubtful feudal superiority in the chiefs of the new principality.

In the wars between the Emperor Charles V., and the French monarch, Piedmont was reduced to ruin. The ill-fated Duke of Savoy was related to both of the contending parties, and both appeared resolved to visit his territories with the worst calamities of war. For twenty-five years Piedmont was occupied by hostile troops. Its sovereign, by successive acts of aggression, was stripped of all his possessions, except Nice. The retention of this he owed to the heroic valour of its people, who defeated the attempts of the invaders in a resistance which bears comparison with the most heroic defences of ancient or modern times.⁸ When Charles III. died, he left little to his son and successor, Emanuel Philibert, except the ducal title and his sword. On that sword the young prince inscribed the motto "*Spoliatis arma supersunt.*" At the age of twenty-five he was entrusted with the command of the

⁸ Nice, in the siege of 1453, was assaulted by the combined forces of the French and Turks. Compelled to abandon the town, the citizens retreated to the citadel, and bravely defended themselves until they were relieved, and their assailants compelled to retire, by the arrival of the Duke of Savoy with a strong army.

In the early days of the siege the Turks had actually mounted the rampart and planted on them the crescent. A woman headed the people, who rushed to the spot. With her own hand this Amazon struck down the standard of the infidel. She does not appear to have added the feminine graces of beauty to the virtue of bravery, at least if we trust the name by which she was known, "*Donna Maufacia*," Dame Uglyface. The people of Nice erected to her a statue—on the pedestal was inscribed :—

"*Nicensa Amazon irruentibus Turcis occurrit
Exemptoque vexillo triumphum meruit.*"

Spanish armies in the Netherlands. The victory of St. Quentin was won by his bravery and skill, and in 1559 the peace of Château Cambresis restored to him the inheritance of his fathers.

Wise and energetic in peace as he had been brave and adventurous in war, Emanuel repaired by his prudence the ravages which the occupation of hostile armies had inflicted on Piedmont. We have said that these ravages reduced the country to such a state, that Charles V., as he looked over a wide waste without human habitations, actually proposed to turn on it the waters of the Ticino and the Po, and form a desolate swamp as a barrier between his own Italian possessions and invasions from the side of France. In twenty years Emanuel Philibert made Piedmont once more prosperous and great. The plains which that savage purpose had doomed to perpetual sterility were covered with teeming crops, the produce of the cultivation of an industrious people, and agriculture and manufactures flourished in the districts which the destructive storm of foreign invasion had left a howling wilderness.

Some time elapsed before negotiations finally restored to him the cities and fortresses of which France or Spain had kept possession at the close of the war. When restored to his entire dominions Emanuel Philibert completed the Italian nationality of the dynasty of Savoy by the removal of the ducal residence from Chambery to Turin. In the early ages of their history the princes of Savoy had been identified with France, not with Italy ; still their feudal claims over districts

in the latter country, probably the traditions of their Italian descent, had always directed their attention towards it. As their dominions in Italy extended, their sympathies gradually moved with their frontier to the south, and long before the peace of Château Cambresis their ambition had pointed to the union of Northern Italy into one kingdom under themselves. Emanuel Philibert had but little reason to remember with pleasure the alliance of his family with the French court. Despoiled of his dominions by his French relations, he had won them back by the sword, which he drew in the service of the Spanish king. No tie of birth, no recollection of childhood or of youth, attached him to the mountain home of his ancestors. His early days had been passed in warring for his father's rights in Piedmont, or in the camps of Germany or the Low Countries. All his recollections of bravery or loyalty, exerted in defence of his family, were associated with Italy. Many of the nobility of Savoy had deserted their fallen monarch and attached themselves to the French king. We can easily understand the feelings which influenced Emanuel in the declaration that he would live and die an Italian prince, a declaration which he fulfilled by moving the seat of government from the northern home of his family to Turin.⁹ (A.D. 1562.)

⁹ The Savoyards, as may be believed, were indignant at the transfer. In the minds of the superstitious, the loss was more severely felt, because with the court was transferred that sacred relic—the *Sacra Sindone*—which, for more than one hundred and fifty years, had been religiously enshrined at Chambery. Believed to be the actual winding-sheet of our Saviour, this precious possession was brought to Turin to accommodate the feebleness and age of St. Charles Borromeo, the good Archbishop of Milan, who had left his home on a pilgrimage to that holy relic; the king was anxious to spare him the fatigue.

In the reign of his son and successor, the marquisate of Saluzzo was added to the Piedmontese possessions. In the vicissitudes of the wars of Charles V. it had fallen under the dominion of France. Henry of Navarre ceded it to Savoy in return for the districts of Bresse. It is true it was the exchange of rich and fruitful lands for a wild and barren tract. The Duke of Savoy was said to have given up as many gentlemen on the north as he obtained peasants on the south of the Alps. Nevertheless the exchange was a great advantage to Savoy. It consolidated its Italian territories ; by the cession of Saluzzo the passes of the Alps were closed against France, and the princes of Savoy once more held the keys of every gate in the mountain barrier which separates the plains of Lombardy from those of the Rhone.¹⁰

From the peace of Château Cambresis to that of Aix-la-Chapelle, the princes of Savoy were engaged in almost all the wars that disturbed in that interval the peace of Europe. Under many vicissitudes, and

of a journey across the Alps. Carlo Borromeo was saved the journey, but the Sacra Sindone never found its way back to its former shrine.

¹⁰ Emanuel Philibert was a prince of stern and overbearing character. Of weakly constitution in infancy and childhood, he grew up with a gloomy moroseness which not unfrequently belongs to those who are prevented from taking part in the exercises and sports of boyhood.

He appears to have been influenced by a deep spirit of devotion. The evening before the battle of St. Quentin he spent in a ruined oratory, where he was accidentally discovered in solitary prayer. It was at one time proposed that he should form a matrimonial alliance with Elizabeth, afterwards Queen of England. No persuasion could induce the Savoyard to assent to seek the hand of a princess of whose attachment to the Church there were doubts.

Unhappily his memory is stained by the persecutions of his Protestant subjects, for which perhaps we may find a palliation in remembering the spirit of the age in which he lived.

with varying fortunes, their power still steadily progressed ; and when the provisions adopted at Aix-la-Chapelle finally restored peace to Europe, they were left, as we have seen, in possession of a frontier in Piedmont, advanced to the banks of the Ticino ; the district of the High Novarese was added to their possessions, and the island of Sardinia brought to them with its sovereignty the kingly title under which they have since been known in history.¹¹

Thus gradually had the Italian territories of the House of Savoy been extended from their original fortresses on the summit of the Alpine passes over all the plains and valleys of Piedmont.¹² Under circumstances apparently the most adverse, a power had been built up by the valour and address of their princes. If we do not attribute to the princes of Savoy all that some of their admirers have claimed for them, it must

¹¹ These acquisitions were the result of many engagements entered into with the princes of the House of Savoy, during the vicissitudes of these long and eventful wars. Some of them were stipulated for in the Convention of Worms in 1742, in which Charles Emanuel gave his adherence to the imperial cause, with the prudent proviso, that on giving three months' notice he should be at liberty to change sides. Montferrat had been for some time attached to the Duchy of Mantua. The High Novarese, with Alexandria and the other districts to the west of the Ticino, formed part of that of Milan. Both these duchies were seized by the emperor in his imperial right. His title to Milan was that of escheat on the extinction of the family of the Visconti. Mantua had been declared forfeited by the last of the Gonzaga for the crime of rebellion against the emperor. The right of the empire over the districts west of the Ticino was ceded to Savoy. The marquisate of Finale was at the same time annexed by the gift of Maria Theresa.

¹² The history of the acquisitions of the house of Savoy is occasionally involved in confusion by the frequent instances of territories taken and retaken in the vicissitudes of the many wars in which they were engaged. Other sources of obscurity exist. With all his unrivalled learning and research, Muratori tells us that the means by which the Counts of Savoy were able to supersede the great feudatories of Ivrea and Susa have baffled his research.

be admitted that unflinching courage, undeviating adherence to their word, and a bold and manly spirit of enterprise, appear to have descended as hereditary virtues through the princes of this race, and those who believe in the transmission of certain attributes with blood, may find a confirmation of their theory in observing in the princes of this family of our own day the very same traits of character which in remote generations won for their ancestors influence and respect.

The old saying of their own country records the common superstition, that seven generations of the House of Savoy must pass untainted by the production of a coward or a fool. Without minutely testing its truth, it is enough to say that these traditional aphorisms, which thus pithily express popular belief, supply, in their general existence, some evidence of their truth. They are testimonies to character which no adulation of courtiers can create. There is more of exaggeration in another of these sayings, which tells us that this family have supplied more blameless knights to the true annals of chivalry than have been invented in the fictions of its romance. Nearer perhaps to the truth is that which accords to them the more worldly praise of always having the courage promptly, and therefore successfully, to meet the spirit, and accommodate themselves to the exigencies of their age. Few countries in Europe have not felt their influence. In England, in the days of Henry III., that influence was matter of national complaint. A prince of Savoy held the earldom of Richmond. To recent times the palace of the Savoy, the residence of this earl, survived, as a memorial of

the esteem in which the Savoyards had once been held. Its last buildings were removed to make way for Waterloo Bridge, but the royal chapel still stands, and the curious explorer can still trace in the vicinity the crumbling remnants of a wall that once formed part of the mansion of "Peter of Savoy."

Their early possession of the passages of the Alps gave them an importance far beyond that which belonged to the extent or resources of their state. When Conrad confirmed to them those mountain districts, no fitter gift could have been conferred upon a bold and adventurous race. Wild and barren as were the glens of Maurienne, they were, to the warlike counts, a richer heritage than the fruitful plain ; there were trained in those rocky uplands a rugged race of warriors marked by the bravery and fidelity that peculiarly belong to the dwellers in the hills ; in these highland fastnesses were impenetrable retreats ; and in the command of the defiles, which were then the only approaches from Northern Europe to Italy, the princes of these regions held a position of power acknowledged in the title which they bore in the middle ages of "Janitors of the Alps."

It must, however, have been confidence in their personal qualities which attracted those voluntary cessions of territory which so repeatedly mark the progress of their acquisitions. There was a period in the history of Europe when "Justice de Savoie" was used as a proverbial synonym for an administration of the law that was both upright and prompt, and to the fame of the wisdom and equity of her early princes Savoy is indebted for many of the territories the inhabitants of

which, centuries ago, sought as a favour the privilege of submission to her rule.¹³

To the same cause must be attributed the remarkable fact, that districts thus added by shreds and patches yet rapidly coalesced into an harmonious and united commonwealth. Their union has stood the severest test, that of representation in a free popular assembly. Even since the Congress of Vienna one of the wisest Sardinian statesmen assured Prince Metternich of the impossibility of ever adopting representative government in the Sardinian States by pointing to the fragmentary additions which had been made from time to time to their gradually enlarging boundaries, as sufficient to ensure that the meeting of their representatives in one assembly would be instantly followed by a national disruption.

The appearance of Savoy in the field of Italian politics introduced into those politics an element which existed only in that State. In no other part of Italy was there anything like feudal attachment to a sovereign. Loyalty in its highest and best sense was throughout the rest of Italy unknown. The spirit of military chivalry even in the form in which it had prevailed in the free cities of Italy had become extinct. The luxurious nobles and merchants were content to defend themselves with mercenary arms.

¹³ Not only Nice and Cuneo, but Chieri, Savigliano, Ivrea, and Mondovì, were numbered among the cities who sought good government and protection by soliciting incorporation with the dominions of Savoy.—*Gallenga*, vol. ii. p. 163.

It is said by some historians that, when the possessions of the House of Achaia lapsed to Amadeus VIII., he left it to the free choice of each city whether it would become independent or be united to his states.—*Gallenga*, vol. ii. p. 162; *Guichenon, Maison Royale de Savoie*, vol. ii. p. 34.

Piedmont, taught by its Savoyard fellow-subjects, was at the same period one great feudal camp. If Piedmont was separated from the early struggles of Italy, its isolation saved it from the fate in which those struggles exhausted the energies of the states engaged in them. If Turin and Vercelli, and Asti, and the cities of Western Lombardy, never attained the freedom or the greatness of the proud republics of the eastern league, yet neither were they torn in the dissensions nor involved in the crimes and degradations which marked their fall. The observation is true that Piedmont rose to power and influence in Italy as the freedom of Italy fell. But it was the infusion into the enervated and prostrate country of the elements of a new energy. It was the descent into the plains of a spirit that had been nursed amid the storms and grandeur of a mountain home.

To the effect produced by such influences Napoleon bore the most signal testimony, when he urged on the French directory an alliance with the Sardinian monarch, by the emphatic statement that one of his regiments was worth all the levies of the Cisalpine republic.¹⁴ In the degenerate days of Italy, military spirit and energy was preserved in Piedmont alone. Acute observers of national character have unhesitatingly given their opinion that the Piedmontese have been elevated by the mixture of many of the qualities of the Savoyard. Their intercourse with their trans-Alpine fellow subjects has grafted on the genius of the Italians the hardihood and boldness of the free

¹⁴ Letters of Napoleon to the French Directory, May 10th, 1799.

mountaineer, and at the same time imparted in the mixed qualities of the Savoyards something of the chivalry and energy of the French. The chieftains as well as the people owe much to the teaching of their early home: the training of the feudal stronghold and the mountain fastness still tempers the character of those who by their proudest title are Princes of Savoy, and the rugged virtues of Chillon and Chambery have not been forgotten in the palaces of Piedmont and Turin.

Those who accept the lesson which all history teaches, and are accustomed to trace in the early events of nations and dynasties the evidences of a design that fits them for the part they are afterwards to perform, may perhaps in the incidents that have marked the origin and progress of the power of the House of Savoy—in their gradual acquisition of Italian territory—in their preservation of the spirit of loyalty and military chivalry—in their very isolation from the early struggles of Italian freedom—in their consequent exemption from Italian crimes,—discern a long course of preparation which has qualified their dynasty for the position of defender of Italian independence which it has assumed.

It may seem fanciful to point to the fact, that at the same time and under circumstances not altogether dissimilar, two dynasties were rising among the fastnesses of the Alps which were yet to represent opposing principles upon the fields of Italy. In the fortress of Chambery the princes of Savoy were gradually acquiring near the banks of the Rhone that

fame and power, which were qualifying their race to be the champion of Italian independence. From another mountain fastness at the far extremity of the Alpine range, and near the waters of the Rhine, the chieftains of Hapsburgh were increasing their territories, and acquiring the influence which led in after ages to their representing in Italy the ascendancy of German power. In the early days of the history of these families the rival chieftains met in a struggle which the Counts of Savoy maintained against Rudolph for the freedom of the Swiss States.¹⁵ Beneath the battlements of Chillon, the chiefs of dynasties, already become rivals, sustained the conflict which after the lapse of centuries their descendants renewed upon the Lombard plains.

In looking back upon the personal history of the Princes of Savoy, we are struck with the frequency with which we meet with voluntary resignations of their sovereign state. It seemed peculiarly the lot of those who added to the dignity and the influence of this house. Amadeus who elevated Savoy to a duchy, and formed the principality of Piedmont, retired in the very height of his power and in the full vigour of his manhood to a solitude at Ripaille. The first king of

¹⁵ Peter of Savoy, the English Earl of Richmond, returned to Savoy about 1264, and found the country round Geneva in possession of the armies of the Count of Hapsburgh. In a gallant surprise he defeated the invaders, and received the Savoy dominions which had devolved on him by the death of his nephew in his absence. It has been said by some writers that Rudolph himself was made prisoner (Cibrario, lib. iii. cap. 2; Verdeil, "Histoire du Canton de Vaud," 1—173—); but there seems no adequate foundation for the assertion. The prisoner was most probably a general of high rank. Vullemmin, Chillon, pp. 106, 312; Gallenga, vol. i. p. 290.

the family followed the example of its first duke, and of eight sovereigns who in a hundred and twenty years have borne the regal crown of Sardinia, four have abdicated the sovereignty.

We may perhaps be permitted to pause for a few moments in reflecting on the destiny which thus seemed to deprive two of the greatest of this line of princes of the full share of the honours and advantages which they had gained for their family. Victor Amadeus the first king of Sardinia abdicated his throne in 1730. Persisting in this step in opposition to the earnest entreaties of his son—he repented of it within a year after it had been irrevocably taken. Demanding from his son the restoration of his royal authority, he was met by a peremptory refusal. He attempted to assert the kingly power, but was by his own son placed in arrest ; soldiers seized him in his chamber as he slept, and conveyed him amid the ill-suppressed murmurs of the troops that escorted the carriage, to the castle of Rivoli. The paroxysms of fury into which the old man burst have left room for the doubt whether his imprisonment is to be regarded as that of a lunatic or a rebel. The broken slab of a marble table is still shown at Rivoli, which the aged monarch in one of his fits of baffled rage is said to have broken with a blow of his clenched hand. In thirteen months of that captivity the energies of life were exhausted. Thus died “the ablest, the most noble, and the most ambitious sovereign of his age.”¹⁶ “A sad termination,”

¹⁶ Sismondi, “*Histoire des Français*,” 16—373 ; Cæsare Balbo, “*Storia D’Italia*,” 326 ; Muratori, “*Annals*,” anno 1731 ; Costa de Beauregard, 3—151.

writes Balbo, "of one of the longest, greatest, happiest, reigns for Piedmont."

Less sad, although perhaps more singular, was the fate of the first duke. Amadeus retired from his sovereignty in the full vigour of his intellect. Resigning his ducal authority to his son, he retired to a hermitage upon the shores of the Lake of Geneva. He had governed his people with prudence and wisdom, and such was the influence of his character that he had been frequently chosen as an arbitrator to settle disputes that seemed to threaten the tranquillity of France or even of Europe; his mediation was submitted to by contending sovereigns and states. In his fifty-first year he voluntarily left this high position to live in a frugal, although by no means ascetic retirement, in the midst of the magnificent solitudes which surrounded his retreat.

From his hermitage he was called to the honours of a Papal chair. The general schism which had long distracted the Christian world with the spectacle of two, or even three, rival Popes, had been supposed to be permanently closed at the Council of Constance. It was revived at that of Basle in 1439. Involved in violent disputes with the Pope Eugenius IV., that council asserted the supremacy of a general council over the Pontiff, and proceeded to the extreme step of deposing Eugenius. The Pope, as might be expected, denied their authority, but this did not prevent the assembled fathers from electing a successor in his room. In want of a Pope of ability and influence they cast their eyes upon Amadeus, and formed the strange

resolution of inviting him to accept the doubtful honour of a disputed election to the Papal throne (November 1432). It was true that he was a layman, a widower, and the father of a large family of sons and daughters.¹⁷ All these things constituted no legal disqualification, and after some real or feigned reluctance Amadeus accepted the proffered dignity. In three days he received all the orders of the Church ; ordained a priest in one day, he was instituted a bishop on the next. His family were present at his reception of orders, and three of his sons, one of them the Duke of Savoy, attended at the celebration of his first mass.

For ten years after his solemn enthronement at Basle, under the title of Felix V., he continued to discharge the functions of Pope, or, as his enemies would say, anti-Pope.¹⁸ Yet his authority was acknowledged by a large proportion of the Christian world. He received it from a council regularly convened, and when to give peace to the Church he laid down that authority, and joined with the members of his council in the election of one who would thus become undoubted Pope, he was invested with the rank of cardinal, and assigned the bishopric of Geneva with pontifical juris-

¹⁷ One of the speakers at the council, who advocated the appointment of Amadeus, declared his opinion, that there was a great advantage in electing a Pope with sons who would be ready to interpose with their protection in his behalf. The same speaker urged strongly on the fathers the absolute necessity of electing a Pope who could bring to his office the support of temporal power. "I had once," said this speaker, "a strong objection to the union of the secular with the spiritual power. I have lived to see my error. A Pope without temporal power to make him independent, would only be the slave of kings."

¹⁸ Riddle's "History of the Papacy," 2—369; Gallenga, vol. i. p. 239; *Monodeus Amadeus Pacificus*.

diction.¹⁹ When a few years afterwards he died at his cathedral, Pope Nicholas pronounced a high eulogium upon his piety and zeal. It is a strange episode in the history of Savoy, as it is in that of Christendom, which records the placing of the tiara upon the head of one who had worn the ducal crown, and reckons a Pope among the lineal ancestors of the present King of Sardinia.²⁰

After the abdication of Amadeus the sovereignty of Savoy was transmitted through ten successive dukes, until, in 1713, that title was merged in the higher one of king. The third sovereign with a royal title, was Victor Amadeus, who at the commencement of the French revolution occupied the throne.

The daughter of Victor Amadeus was married to the Count of Artois, brother of the unfortunate Louis XVI. The king's own principles and feelings were all violently opposed to the movements of the revolution. In its very commencement the Count of Artois fled from Paris, and took refuge at the court of Turin; he was accompanied by some, and followed by others, of the emigrant nobility of France. That court, like most of those in Europe, was acquainted with the appeals which Louis XVI. was privately making to the sovereigns, to restore the cause of absolute monarchy in France. Conferences were held at Pavia and

¹⁹ Monodius, p. 262; Guichenon, *Preuves*, 4—341.

²⁰ Over a ruined gateway at Ripaille the arms of the Papacy are, or at least till a few years ago were, to be seen. In the days of the French revolution a zealous republican had, by a very slight defacement, converted the tiara into an excellent representation of the cap of liberty.—*Lord Broughton's Italy*.



Mantua, in which efforts were made to form a league of monarchs for the re-establishment of the despotic authority of the French King.

Whatever was the result of these conferences the King of Sardinia at first refused to be a party to any combination against France. It was not until the summer of 1792, that he lent himself cordially to any project of the kind. He subsequently gave his prompt acquiescence to the proposal made by the court of Naples to form a confederation of Italian States for the purpose of protecting Italy from any invasion on the part of France, a proposal which the apathy of Venice and the cowardice of the Neapolitan government defeated.²¹

In the autumn of 1792 his dominions were the object of French invasion. A proposal of alliance from the French republic was scornfully rejected, and this was followed on the part of the Directory by a declaration of war.²² Even before that declaration the authority of the Sardinian sovereign in his most ancient dominions had been overthrown. The proximity of Savoy to France exposed it more directly to the intrigues of the revolutionary spirit. Jacobin clubs had been established at Chambery, and disaffection spread throughout the duchy. On the 21st of December, a French army of 20,000 men crossed the frontiers from France. The invasion was preceded a few days by a formal declaration of war, although in a letter to the Swiss republic, and another to the Canton of Berne, dated on

²¹ See *post*, chap. vii.

²² Annual Register, State Papers, 1792.

the 10th of October, the king complained that his territories had been invaded without any announcement that hostilities were about to commence.²³

Under the coercion or the protection of the French troops immediately on their entering the country, a deputation was sent to Paris to ask in the name of the Savoyards for incorporation with the newly formed republic of France. The National Convention assured the deputies that regenerated France was ready to make common cause with all who aspired to shake off the yoke of their old tyrants, and to place themselves under her protection. The proffered junction was accepted on the ground that "the Alps eternally forced Savoy back into the domains of France—all efforts to unite it with Piedmont were fruitless." The proud principality which for centuries had blazoned its name among the noblest records of European chivalry, sank down into a portion of the French republic, and became the department of Mont Blanc.

This was speedily followed by the seizure of the territory of Nice, which with the principality of Monaco, was erected into the department of the Maritime Alps.

Thus stripped of his most ancient possessions Victor Amadeus with the aid of a British squadron in the Mediterranean, and the support of subsidies from England, continued for a few years with varying fortunes, to harass the French in their usurped possessions, or resist their attacks upon his Piedmontese or Sardinian dominions.²⁴

²³ Annual Register, 1792.

²⁴ The bravery of the Piedmontese troops in this desultory warfare is acknowledged by the French historians ; writers, it must be said, not always ready to award the fair share of praise to the opponents of their country.

The triumphant arms of Napoleon forced him in 1796, to accept the alliance which four years before he had scornfully rejected. It was indeed only through the strong exertion of Napoleon's personal influence that the French Directory were then persuaded to consent to the alliance. The genius of their general saw the advantage and power which would result to the cause of France from the co-operation of the Sardinian State. It was then that he wrote to the Directory the opinion that one of the Sardinian regiments was "worth all the armies of the Cisalpine republic." The peace of Cherasco, or as it is generally called Paris, was signed on the 15th of May, 1796. A few months afterwards Victor Amadeus died, leaving to his brother Charles Emanuel a precarious sovereignty which lasted but for two years.

The Directory, after Napoleon had left Europe for Egypt, were not unwilling to find reasons for a departure from the policy of their general. A revolt against the king's authority was punished by him with a merciless severity, which was as imprudent as it was cruel. The French were placed in the odious position of sanctioning, and even enforcing by their troops, the execution of those whose only crime was the maintenance of the principles which were the foundation of the revolutionary government of France. An excuse was soon found for putting an end to a state of things which the Directory could not continue without discredit if not without danger ; and on the 4th of December, 1798, Charles Emanuel unconditionally surrendered Piedmont to the armies of the Revolution. It was

intended by the French Directory that the royal family should have been brought in honourable captivity to Paris. Talleyrand desirous of saving the French government the odium of this act, had taken on himself to send an urgent message to hasten their departure.²⁵ On the 9th of December Charles Emanuel left Turin. With a scrupulous care, the dictate of a high-minded and chivalrous spirit, he refused to take with him any of the valuables which could be said to belong to the crown. The treasures of the palace, even the jewels that had been the ornament of his person, were left under the protection of seals ; and, at a late hour of the night, amid the falling flakes of a snow-storm, and leaving by torch-light the palace of his fathers, the deposed monarch proceeded to find a shelter, first in Parma, afterwards in Tuscany, and finally escaped to the island which gave him the title of king. He landed at Cagliari on the 9th of February. It had been intended by the French Directory to intercept him on his passage, and carry him a prisoner to Corsica, and an English frigate followed at a distance to protect him from the intended attack of the French privateers.²⁶ No sooner had he landed in Sardinia than he issued a protest against the violence which had forced his surrender of his Continental States.

²⁵ Botta, vol. iii. p. 138.

²⁶ "Not content with turning the King of Sardinia out of Piedmont, they intended seizing his person after he left Leghorn by some of their privateers, and carrying him to Corsica; for, if they could have prevented him, he never would have got to Sardinia."

"Captain Lewis had been requested to allow his ship to go as if by accident in company with the vessel. For to such a state of degradation is this monarch reduced that he dare not publicly accept the offered protection

The French ascendancy in Italy was destined to an early and a complete reverse. In 1799, the very year after the victories of Napoleon, his conquests were wrested from the republic with a rapidity almost as marvellous as that with which they had been achieved. The victories of Suwarrow placed him in possession of Turin; and by the invitation of the Muscovite commander, Victor Emanuel left Cagliari in a British man-of-war, and landed at Leghorn to resume the possession of his kingdom.²⁷

The progress of the returning monarch was stopped by a transaction as strange as any which the annals of European diplomacy record. The ministers of Austria insisted on the cession of Piedmont to their

of the British fleet.—*Letter of Lord Nelson to Lord St. Vincent, 13th February, 1799.*—*Clarke and M'Arthur's Life of Nelson.*

²⁷ On the 6th of August (1799) the minister of the King of Sardinia, wrote from Cagliari, to Lord Nelson (then at Palermo) stating, that as soon as the Piedmontese dominions had been reconquered by the combined Austrian and Russian armies, his Sardinian Majesty had resolved to send some eminent persons belonging to his court to his continental dominions to restore the former order of things, and to reorganize the royal government of his house; and for this purpose his Majesty requested Lord Nelson to detach two frigates to Cagliari for the safe conveyance of the Commissioners. On the 11th of August the King wrote himself to Lord Nelson on the subject:—

“DEAR ADMIRAL NELSON,—I have felt great pleasure from your letter of the first of this month, and I acknowledge myself much obliged to you for your polite attention in offering me a sufficient number of ships for the conveyance of the royal family to my continental dominions. I shall send one of my ministers to concert with you, and I shall be ready to embark as soon as the ships arrive. My brother, the Duke of Aosta, has been obliged to hasten from the island, owing to the loss of Prince Charles, his only son, which has overwhelmed me and the whole kingdom with sorrow. You also, my dear Admiral, will sympathise with me on this unfortunate event.

“With an assurance of my esteem and gratitude, I am your true friend,

“CHARLES EMANUEL.”

—*Clarke and M'Arthur's Life*, vol. ii. p. 206.

imperial master. All Italy north of the Po was included in the claim which they put forward. On the other side of the Alps, they asked for Dauphiny and Savoy. The provinces which the treaty of Tolentino had severed from the Papal States were also demanded as additions to the Austrian domains.²⁸

The claim of this enormous acquisition of territory could hardly be expected to meet with an immediate and unhesitating assent. Negotiations ensued, in which the Austrian cabinet threatened, that if their demands were not conceded, they would open with France negotiations for a separate treaty of peace.²⁹ England was asked, not only to accede to these demands, but also to induce or compel the acquiescence of the Sardinian King, and to persuade the King of Naples to with-

²⁸ "A portion of the correspondence on the subject is published in the commencement of the fifth volume of Lord Castlereagh's despatches. The English cabinet at first regarded the restoration of Charles Emanuel as a matter of course. In June Lord Grenville wrote to Lord Minto, stating the opinion of the English cabinet that, if not already done, no time should be lost in replacing the King of Sardinia in possession of his dominions.

"Should the Austrians aim at the recovery of the Novarese," continues this despatch, "this is certainly within their own power, and could not be very strongly objected to by the King of Sardinia if restored by their efforts to the rest of his dominions." "It would, in that instance, be desirable that the hands in which the banner of Italy is placed should in some other mode be strengthened, and any proper arrangement which should open to that power a more extensive communication with the sea-coast would operate favourably to the interests of this country in the Mediterranean."

In reference to an indemnity from the possessions of Genoa, Lord Grenville in another letter observed, that "there was no motive either of justice or of policy to prevent his Majesty from concurring in a measure for satisfying the pretensions of an ally out of the territories of a power which has for centuries been under the influence of France, and with which his Majesty is at this time engaged in war, the result of repeated insults and provocations offered to his Majesty."

²⁹ Letter of Lord Minto.—*Castlereagh Correspondence*, p. 6.

draw the claims which he was making to a portion of the Papal States.

The cabinet of England temporised with these extraordinary claims. Lord Grenville, then the English Secretary, secretly instructed Lord Minto, the British representative at Vienna, that, while England would not view with alarm or dissatisfaction the aggrandisement of Austria, there was difficulty in supporting these pretensions to their full extent.³⁰ At one time the British minister believed that he had succeeded in inducing Count Thugut to moderate his pretensions upon Piedmont, and to be content with the possession of the High Novarese, the fortress of Alessandria, and the command of the Piedmontese army. This moderation was afterwards disclaimed upon the singular plea, that in making these mitigated proposals the Austrian minister had been in jest ! At the very last minute, a claim for Parma and Lucca was put forward, and the imperial cabinet refused to disclaim the intention of an appropriation of the Tuscan States.³¹

From the cabinet of St. Petersburg, the Austrian proposals met with a much more manly and determined opposition. There is little doubt that it was the conduct of Austria upon this occasion which alienated the

³⁰ I have said enough in my former despatch to enable your lordship to prove to M. De Thugut that his Majesty is very far from entertaining any views hostile to the interests of Austria. Much of the reasoning urged to your lordship in support of his plan of obtaining peace in Italy appears to his Majesty's servants to be perfectly well founded in reference not only to the separate interests of this country, but also to the permanent tranquillity of Europe. Nor is the aggrandisement of the House of Austria in itself a point to which this country has been accustomed to look with dissatisfaction or alarm."—*Lord Grenville to Lord Minto, September 4th, 1799.*

³¹ Letter of Lord Minto, May 1st, 1800.

Russian Emperor, and broke up the alliance against France. Paul had joined the coalition of 1798 against France with the avowed object of restoring everything to the state in which it had been before the revolutionary war. He had formed an earnest wish for the restoration of the King of Sardinia, and this object the emperor personally regarded with an intensity of feeling that was, perhaps, a symptom of the malady that was affecting his mind. His ministers, who probably did not look upon the aggressive demands of Austria with just the same complacency as England, were not prepared to abandon the rights of the legitimate sovereign of Piedmont. Austria, however, was firm in her demands,³² and finally the foreign minister of the Cabinet of Vienna stated the unalterable resolve of his imperial master never to consent to the restoration of the Sardinian king.³³

Meanwhile, at Leghorn, Charles Emanuel awaited in astonishment and dismay the result of these singular negotiations. The dispute was settled in a manner which none of the parties would have desired. Buonaparte returned from Egypt, and in the following year the campaign of Marengo restored in Italy the ascendancy of the French arms.

³² To Count Panin, the Russian minister, Count Cobentzel rested the claims of Austria to retain the Roman Legations upon the right of conquest.

"How can the surrender of the three legations be demanded? By the treaty of Tolentino they were annexed to the Cisalpine republic, which we have conquered. They form a just compensation for the expenses of the war. I do not doubt that my court would give up Piedmont to the King of Sardinia. But Alexandria and Tortona having been detached from the Milanese by force of arms, ought now, by the same right, to return to the dominion of Austria."
—*Cantu, Histoire des Cent Ans*, vol. ii. p. 173.

³³ Letter of Lord Minto, May 1799.

Had Suwarrow been permitted at once to pursue the victories by which he had chased the French beyond the crest of the Alps, and march through Savoy with the combined forces of Austria and Russia upon the southern frontiers of the disheartened republic, the future of Europe might in all probability have been very different. But the Aulic council put their peremptory veto upon this course. The veteran chief of the Muscovites led his armies over the passes of the St. Gothard to join the Austrian armies at Lucerne. Before he could come to their assistance, they had already been defeated by the French. The only result of this terrible expedition was the deathless fame that associates itself with the conflicts which he maintained almost on the summits of the Alpine chain—conflicts in which armies defiled along passes hitherto only trodden by the step of the chamois hunter, and men fought their death-struggle on the verge of precipices down which the fallen combatant was precipitated into chasms thousands of feet below.³³

The conduct of Austria, especially in refusing to assent to the restoration of the king of Sardinia, had given deep and just offence to the Russian emperor. Napoleon dexterously availed himself of this dissatisfaction. In his communications to the court of St. Petersburg, he dwelt upon the unprincipled ambition which Austria had displayed. He artfully worked on

³³ Near the summit of the pass of St. Gothard, the traveller may read, indistinctly visible after sixty years, in which the winds and rains and frosts have been carrying on the process of obliteration, the words which the veteran warrior cut in gigantic characters in the rock—"Suwarrow Victor."

the emperor's pride by representing the studied indignity which had been put upon him in countermanding the invitation which Suwarrow had sent to the Sardinian king. In the same communications he stated his own willingness to replace the King of Sardinia, unless compensation could be found for him elsewhere. Influenced by these representations and by jealousy of the naval supremacy of England in the Baltic, the Russian emperor refused to take any further part against France.

The defection of Russia soon after left Austria to bear alone, or with the assistance of England, the force of Napoleon's attack. The first consul, for Napoleon had now attained that dignity, with marvellous secrecy made his preparations to lead an army across the Alps. In utter ignorance of the armaments that were marshalling against them, the Austrian generals remained inactive between the plains of Lombardy and the fortresses of Piedmont. Negotiation between Austria and England still pursued its slow contest for the disposal of territories, the possession of which was not yet secure. Within six months the armies of Napoleon burst upon the astonished Austrians from every summit of the Alps, and the victory of Marengo compelled the imperial cabinet to seek in other means the realisation of their schemes of territorial aggrandisement.

Mortified by disappointment, and stung by the injustice and bad faith with which he considered he had been treated, Charles Emanuel refused to expose his humiliation to his subjects in the island whose hospitable refuge he had left in the triumph of a monarch recovering his ancient domains. He retired

to Naples, where he remained until the peace of Amiens recognised on the part of England the annexation of Savoy and Piedmont to France. In these multiplied calamities he had recourse to the usual consolation of the princes of his house. On the 4th of June, 1802, he abdicated all that he retained of sovereignty in favour of his brother, Victor Emanuel I., and devoted himself to the austerities of that religion to which, like most of his family, he was sincerely, if not superstitiously attached. The year after the restoration the ex-king was admitted as one of the earliest novices of the revived Company of the Jesuits at Rome.³⁴ He lived however long enough to see his brother ascend the throne of Piedmont. He died in 1819, in the profession of the Order, and within the walls of the convent into which he had been received.

In the interim, Napoleon, after his reconquest of Italy, in fulfilment of his pledge to Paul, made overtures to Charles Emanuel on the subject of his restoration to the throne of his ancestors.³⁵ Few instances in history exhibit more high and chivalrous honour than is to be found in the answer of the exiled Sardinian king. Notwithstanding the treatment he had received, Charles Emanuel refused to enter on any negotiation to which his allies should not be parties. When all those allies, except England, had made peace with France, he attempted to open the negotiations which at first he had declined, but when he was ready to treat with the first consul, the death of Paul had altered his

³⁴ Annual Register, 1816, p. 118.

³⁵ Denina, *It. Occident*, vol. v. pp. 281—283.

position, and by a consular edict bearing date on the 11th of September, 1802, in reality issued at a later period, Piedmont was incorporated with the republic of France.³⁶

His brother, Victor Emanuel, in a year or two later returned to the island which gave him the title, and in which, even by the terms of his surrender to France he still retained the authority, of a king. A short time afterwards the English government came to the resolution of maintaining a fleet and an army in the Mediterranean, to harass the French power in Italy. Subsidies were offered to the Neapolitan and the Sardinian king. Victor Emanuel rejected the assistance with the proud reply :—

“I do not want to become one of your Indian Rajahs.”³⁷ He had rankling in his breast the impression that his brother's cause had been betrayed by England, both in the negotiations with Austria, and in the completion of the peace of Amiens. At all events he refused the subsidy which England offered, and preferred an honourable poverty to a dependence upon the pension of a foreign state.

Immediately on hearing of the abdication of Napoleon, Lord William Bentinck, commanding the British forces in Italy, despatched a special messenger to Victor Emanuel, requesting him at once to take possession of

³⁶ At the negotiations for the peace of Amiens it was proposed to indemnify the King of Sardinia by lands in Greece, to be wrested from Turkey, to which as heir of the princes of Achaia, he could prefer some obsolete claim.—*Sclopis, Relazioni*, p. 121.

³⁷ Martini, “*Storia di Sardegna*,” p. 127; Cibrario, “*Istituzione*,” p. 210; Gallenga, vol. iii. p. 302.

his dominions. There seemed to be in the mind of the English general some apprehensions that Austria might renew her claims of 1799, and he was anxious to anticipate the attempt. No such designs were entertained by the imperial cabinet, or if they were, at least they were abandoned with a good grace. On the 25th of April, Prince Schwartzenberg issued a proclamation to the Piedmontese, in which he announced the restoration of their ancient sovereigns. An amnesty was promised for all that was past. Services even in the armies of the French would be only remembered as proofs of the valour of the nation, not as evidence of disloyalty to their legitimate prince. This was not the only instance in which Austria dexterously assumed the position of arbiter of the fate of Italy, and endeavoured to make it appear that even for the favour of an amnesty, the subjects of the restored princes were indebted to the influence of the imperial counsels.

Victor Emanuel, as has been said, landed at Genoa on the 12th, and entered Turin on the 20th May. By a singular coincidence the vessel that was bearing him home to his dominions, crossed the path of the English frigate "Undaunted," which was carrying Napoleon to Elba. The ships were close enough to enable the attendants of the Sardinian king to distinguish with their glasses the emperor on the deck. The English vessel would of course have saluted the standard of the Sardinian king. To avoid this, he ordered the course of the ship to be changed, and spared his fallen enemy the mortification of such a meeting.³⁸

³⁸ Litta, Gallenga, vol. iii. p. 304.

The proceedings of Victor Emanuel on his return were apparently not calculated to preserve the affection which, on the occasion of his entry into Turin, his people displayed. The very day after that entry he issued a proclamation, by which all the laws of 1770 were restored. By this compendious edict all feudal privileges were re-established—all old penal laws were revived. All the improvements which the government of the French had introduced in the laws or the administration, were annulled. The king's own expression was that he desired everything that had passed in his absence to be but as a dream. All ancient offices were revived, and that everything might be at once brought back to its old condition, it is said that one of his courtiers brought the king a court almanack of 1795, and a warrant was at once made out, reappointing to their former situations all those whose names appeared in its lists. The result was, of course, that many persons were reappointed to their offices who had for years been mouldering in their graves.³⁹

This edict destroyed the simple and public course of legal trials, established by the Code Napoleon, and substituted for it all the inconveniences of the tribunals of the middle ages. Yet the change was not unpopular at Turin. Upon the first sitting of the restored tribunal, the populace testified their satisfaction by breaking into the archives of the abolished court of appeal, and destroying all the records of its proceedings. They were instigated probably by persons

³⁹ Cibrario, "*Instituzione della Monarchia*," p. 211.

whose interest it was that these records should no longer exist.

The king was very soon obliged to qualify the indiscriminate restoration of the old laws by an edict, abolishing the use of torture, and repealing that iniquitous law which attached the penalty of infamy to the relations of the guilty. But all the barbarous punishments of a sanguinary age were still retained; and in the earlier years after his restoration criminals were actually broken on the wheel.

The kingly prerogative was restored to all its ancient powers; among others, to that of the issue of the "*Viglietti reali*;" royal letters by which the king, as supreme source of all criminal and civil justice, could direct the arbitrary arrest of any of his subjects or in civil cases suspend the course of justice in the ordinary courts.

For this latter purpose they were freely used. Debtors, who found favour with the court, were protected from any molestation by those to whom they owed money. Suits upon contracts made during the revolution were, in many cases, prohibited, and the contracts thus virtually annulled. The old laws of Sardinia gave to the king this supreme right of equitable interference with the strict requirements of the law. Upon the same principle on which is founded the jurisdiction of the English Court of Chancery, there was reserved to the sovereign the prerogative of remedying the injustice that might often be done by a strict adherence to the forms of law. The cruel and vindictive creditor might reasonably be restrained by

royal interference from the unjust exercise of his rights. The successful litigant, who used his legal rights in opposition to the dictates of natural justice, ought in reason to be controlled. "*Leges res surdæ et immutabiles.*" The royal authority was permitted to step in and redress those grievances, which must occur under the best regulated system of general rules.

Left to the personal discretion of the monarch this power was used by Victor Emanuel, in several instances at least, to annul the transactions and dealings in private property which had taken place under the hated revolutionary rule. Complaints were made to the allied powers that they amounted to a violation of the provisions of the treaty of Paris. The discontent of the old republicans was increased by the manifest exclusion of those who had been employed under the French government, from their fair share of patronage and promotion, perhaps even more so by the unwise and churlish order which prohibited the use of the decoration of the cross of the legion of honour or of the iron crown. This narrow-minded prohibition deprived some of the bravest of those veterans, whose services to France the proclamation of Schwartzenberg had promised should be remembered only as proofs of their valour, of the poor satisfaction of exhibiting the hard-won honours which formed the only recompence for the spent years of their existence, their sufferings, and their wounds.

In the laws relating to religion, Victor Emanuel inherited all the prejudices of his house. His first act on arriving at Turin was to close the universities ;

they were not opened until they were placed under the direction of the Jesuits, to whom on their restoration the whole control over Piedmontese education was assigned. The laws against heretics were renewed with all their intolerance. Not even the intercession of Lord William Bentinck could obtain for the Protestants of the Waldensian valleys the slightest relaxation in those laws. To them the restoration of the ancient sovereigns brought nothing but oppression. After the perfect freedom and equality which they had enjoyed under the government of France, they found themselves sent back to those oppressive laws, which barely tolerated their existence within certain districts, and even within those limits could scarcely be said to permit them the free exercise of their religion.⁴⁰

Still further to show his devotion to the Holy See, the king dispatched to the Pope as special ambassador, a nobleman noted for his attachment to the Church. The Marquis D'Azeglio was sent to Rome with a mission which charged him to express to the Pontiff "the great desire which the King of Sardinia entertained to do all in his power to repair the serious injuries which the Catholic religion had suffered both by the toleration granted to other religions, as by the scandal caused to Piedmont by the government of the French, and by that spirit of independence of the Holy Apostolic See which had been spread through the people to the injury of that respect and devotion to the Chair of St. Peter

⁴⁰ Under the Code Napoleon the Protestant inhabitants of the Piedmontese valleys enjoyed perfect equality. The old laws of Piedmont confined them to the valleys. They did not permit them to be physicians or advocates.—*Baird's History of Italian Protestantism.*

which the king himself professed, and which he now wished should also be the profession of his subjects."

The boon which the marquis was charged to obtain from the Pontiff was the re-establishment of all the ancient Piedmontese bishoprics, the organisation of a plan for the restoration of the monastic orders in their pristine numbers and splendour, and the foundation of two colleges of Jesuits in the territories of the king.

The court of Rome received these professions with great satisfaction, and took the opportunity of pressing upon the representative of the pious monarch, the duty of acknowledging the feudal supremacy of the Holy See, by payment of the annual tribute of a golden chalice, which it was alleged was the right of the successors of St. Peter. The national pride of the Sardinian king was touched. Ready as he was to pay all spiritual obedience to Rome, he refused to acknowledge his kingdom as a fief of its bishop. The demand was followed by long and elaborate arguments between the minister of the Pope and the representative of the king. The concession of the annual homage of this feudal service was in the end peremptorily refused, and in the month of October the Marquis D'Azeglio sought permission to retire from a position in which, he stated, that he found it impossible to reconcile the conflicting claims of loyalty to his sovereign, with that duty of implicit obedience which he owed to the Holy See.

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For this latter purpose they were freely used. Debtors, who found favour with the court, were protected from any molestation by those to whom they owed money. Suits upon contracts made during the revolution were, in many cases, prohibited, and the contracts thus virtually annulled. The old laws of Sardinia gave to the king this supreme right of equitable interference with the strict requirements of the law. Upon the same principle on which is founded the jurisdiction of the English Court of Chancery, there was reserved to the sovereign the prerogative of remedying the injustice that might often be done by a strict adherence to the forms of law. The cruel and vindictive creditor might reasonably be restrained by



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Left to the personal discretion of the monarch this power was used by Victor Emanuel, in several instances at least, to annul the transactions and dealings in private property which had taken place under the hated revolutionary rule. Complaints were made to the allied powers that they amounted to a violation of the provisions of the treaty of Paris. The discontent of the old republicans was increased by the manifest exclusion of those who had been employed under the French government, from their fair share of patronage and promotion, perhaps even more so by the unwise and churlish order which prohibited the use of the decoration of the cross of the legion of honour or of the iron crown. This narrow-minded prohibition deprived some of the bravest of those veterans, whose services to France the proclamation of Schwartzenberg had promised should be remembered only as proofs of their valour, of the poor satisfaction of exhibiting the hard-won honours which formed the only recompence for the spent years of their existence, their sufferings, and their wounds.

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The cabinet of England temporised with these extraordinary claims. Lord Grenville, then the English Secretary, secretly instructed Lord Minto, the British representative at Vienna, that, while England would not view with alarm or dissatisfaction the aggrandisement of Austria, there was difficulty in supporting these pretensions to their full extent.³⁰ At one time the British minister believed that he had succeeded in inducing Count Thugut to moderate his pretensions upon Piedmont, and to be content with the possession of the High Novarese, the fortress of Alessandria, and the command of the Piedmontese army. This moderation was afterwards disclaimed upon the singular plea, that in making these mitigated proposals the Austrian minister had been in jest! At the very last minute, a claim for Parma and Lucca was put forward, and the imperial cabinet refused to disclaim the intention of an appropriation of the Tuscan States.³¹

From the cabinet of St. Petersburg, the Austrian proposals met with a much more manly and determined opposition. There is little doubt that it was the conduct of Austria upon this occasion which alienated the

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Meanwhile, at Leghorn, Charles Emanuel awaited in astonishment and dismay the result of these singular negotiations. The dispute was settled in a manner which none of the parties would have desired. Buonaparte returned from Egypt, and in the following year the campaign of Marengo restored in Italy the ascendancy of the French arms.

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“How can the surrender of the three legations be demanded? By the treaty of Tolentino they were annexed to the Cisalpine republic, which we have conquered. They form a just compensation for the expenses of the war. I do not doubt that my court would give up Piedmont to the King of Sardinia. But Alexandria and Tortona having been detached from the Milanese by force of arms, ought now, by the same right, to return to the dominion of Austria.”
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The defection of Russia soon after left Austria to bear alone, or with the assistance of England, the force of Napoleon's attack. The first consul, for Napoleon had now attained that dignity, with marvellous secrecy made his preparations to lead an army across the Alps. In utter ignorance of the armaments that were marshalling against them, the Austrian generals remained inactive between the plains of Lombardy and the fortresses of Piedmont. Negotiation between Austria and England still pursued its slow contest for the disposal of territories, the possession of which was not yet secure. Within six months the armies of Napoleon burst upon the astonished Austrians from every summit of the Alps, and the victory of Marengo compelled the imperial cabinet to seek in other means the realisation of their schemes of territorial aggrandisement.

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to Naples, where he remained until the peace of Amiens recognised on the part of England the annexation of Savoy and Piedmont to France. In these multiplied calamities he had recourse to the usual consolation of the princes of his house. On the 4th of June, 1802, he abdicated all that he retained of sovereignty in favour of his brother, Victor Emanuel I., and devoted himself to the austerities of that religion to which, like most of his family, he was sincerely, if not superstitiously attached. The year after the restoration the ex-king was admitted as one of the earliest novices of the revived Company of the Jesuits at Rome.³⁴ He lived however long enough to see his brother ascend the throne of Piedmont. He died in 1819, in the profession of the Order, and within the walls of the convent into which he had been received.

In the interim, Napoleon, after his reconquest of Italy, in fulfilment of his pledge to Paul, made overtures to Charles Emanuel on the subject of his restoration to the throne of his ancestors.³⁵ Few instances in history exhibit more high and chivalrous honour than is to be found in the answer of the exiled Sardinian king. Notwithstanding the treatment he had received, Charles Emanuel refused to enter on any negotiation to which his allies should not be parties. When all those allies, except England, had made peace with France, he attempted to open the negotiations which at first he had declined, but when he was ready to treat with the first consul, the death of Paul had altered his

³⁴ Annual Register, 1816, p. 118.

³⁵ Denina, *It. Occident*, vol. v. pp. 281—283.

position, and by a consular edict bearing date on the 11th of September, 1802, in reality issued at a later period, Piedmont was incorporated with the republic of France.³⁶

His brother, Victor Emanuel, in a year or two later returned to the island which gave him the title, and in which, even by the terms of his surrender to France he still retained the authority, of a king. A short time afterwards the English government came to the resolution of maintaining a fleet and an army in the Mediterranean, to harass the French power in Italy. Subsidies were offered to the Neapolitan and the Sardinian king. Victor Emanuel rejected the assistance with the proud reply :—

“I do not want to become one of your Indian Rajahs.”³⁷ He had rankling in his breast the impression that his brother's cause had been betrayed by England, both in the negotiations with Austria, and in the completion of the peace of Amiens. At all events he refused the subsidy which England offered, and preferred an honourable poverty to a dependence upon the pension of a foreign state.

Immediately on hearing of the abdication of Napoleon, Lord William Bentinck, commanding the British forces in Italy, despatched a special messenger to Victor Emanuel, requesting him at once to take possession of

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Russian Emperor, and broke up the alliance against France. Paul had joined the coalition of 1798 against France with the avowed object of restoring everything to the state in which it had been before the revolutionary war. He had formed an earnest wish for the restoration of the King of Sardinia, and this object the emperor personally regarded with an intensity of feeling that was, perhaps, a symptom of the malady that was affecting his mind. His ministers, who probably did not look upon the aggressive demands of Austria with just the same complacency as England, were not prepared to abandon the rights of the legitimate sovereign of Piedmont. Austria, however, was firm in her demands,³² and finally the foreign minister of the Cabinet of Vienna stated the unalterable resolve of his imperial master never to consent to the restoration of the Sardinian king.³³

Meanwhile, at Leghorn, Charles Emanuel awaited in astonishment and dismay the result of these singular negotiations. The dispute was settled in a manner which none of the parties would have desired. Buonaparte returned from Egypt, and in the following year the campaign of Marengo restored in Italy the ascendancy of the French arms.

³² To Count Panin, the Russian minister, Count Cobentzel rested the claims of Austria to retain the Roman Legations upon the right of conquest.

"How can the surrender of the three legations be demanded? By the treaty of Tolentino they were annexed to the Cisalpine republic, which we have conquered. They form a just compensation for the expenses of the war. I do not doubt that my court would give up Piedmont to the King of Sardinia. But Alexandria and Tortona having been detached from the Milanese by force of arms, ought now, by the same right, to return to the dominion of Austria."
—*Cantu, Histoire des Cent Ans*, vol. ii. p. 173.

³³ Letter of Lord Minto, May 1799.

his dominions. There seemed to be in the mind of the English general some apprehensions that Austria might renew her claims of 1799, and he was anxious to anticipate the attempt. No such designs were entertained by the imperial cabinet, or if they were, at least they were abandoned with a good grace. On the 25th of April, Prince Schwartzenberg issued a proclamation to the Piedmontese, in which he announced the restoration of their ancient sovereigns. An amnesty was promised for all that was past. Services even in the armies of the French would be only remembered as proofs of the valour of the nation, not as evidence of disloyalty to their legitimate prince. This was not the only instance in which Austria dexterously assumed the position of arbiter of the fate of Italy, and endeavoured to make it appear that even for the favour of an amnesty, the subjects of the restored princes were indebted to the influence of the imperial counsels.

Victor Emanuel, as has been said, landed at Genoa on the 12th, and entered Turin on the 20th May. By a singular coincidence the vessel that was bearing him home to his dominions, crossed the path of the English frigate "Undaunted," which was carrying Napoleon to Elba. The ships were close enough to enable the attendants of the Sardinian king to distinguish with their glasses the emperor on the deck. The English vessel would of course have saluted the standard of the Sardinian king. To avoid this, he ordered the course of the ship to be changed, and spared his fallen enemy the mortification of such a salute.

³⁸ Litta, Gall.

The proceedings of Victor Emanuel on his return were apparently not calculated to preserve the affection which, on the occasion of his entry into Turin, his people displayed. The very day after that entry he issued a proclamation, by which all the laws of 1770 were restored. By this compendious edict all feudal privileges were re-established—all old penal laws were revived. All the improvements which the government of the French had introduced in the laws or the administration, were annulled. The king's own expression was that he desired everything that had passed in his absence to be but as a dream. All ancient offices were revived, and that everything might be at once brought back to its old condition, it is said that one of his courtiers brought the king a court almanack of 1795, and a warrant was at once made out, reappointing to their former situations all those whose names appeared in its lists. The result was, of course, that many persons were reappointed to their offices who had for years been mouldering in their graves.³⁹

This edict destroyed the simple and public course of legal trials, established by the Code Napoleon, and substituted for it all the inconveniences of the tribunals of the middle ages. Yet the change was not unpopular at Turin. Upon the first sitting of the restored tribunal, the populace testified their satisfaction by breaking into the archives of the abolished court of appeal, and destroying all the records of its proceedings. They were instigated probably by persons

³⁹ Cibrario, "Instituzione della Monarchia," p. 211.

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whose interest it was that these records should no longer exist.

The king was very soon obliged to qualify the indiscriminate restoration of the old laws by an edict, abolishing the use of torture, and repealing that iniquitous law which attached the penalty of infamy to the relations of the guilty. But all the barbarous punishments of a sanguinary age were still retained; and in the earlier years after his restoration criminals were actually broken on the wheel.

The kingly prerogative was restored to all its ancient powers; among others, to that of the issue of the "Viglietti reali;" royal letters by which the king, as supreme source of all criminal and civil justice, could direct the arbitrary arrest of any of his subjects or in civil cases suspend the course of justice in the ordinary courts.

For this latter purpose they were freely used. Debtors, who found favour with the court, were protected from any molestation by those to whom they owed money. Suits upon contracts made during the revolution were, in many cases, prohibited, and the contracts thus virtually annulled. The old laws of Sardinia gave to the king this supreme right of equitable interference with the strict requirements of the law. Upon the same principle on which is founded the jurisdiction of the English Court of Chancery, there was reserved to the sovereign the prerogative of remedying the injustice that might often be done by a strict adherence to the forms of law. The cruel and vindictive creditor might reasonably be restrained by

royal interference from the unjust exercise of his rights. The successful litigant, who used his legal rights in opposition to the dictates of natural justice, ought in reason to be controlled. "*Leges res surdæ et immutabiles.*" The royal authority was permitted to step in and redress those grievances, which must occur under the best regulated system of general rules.

Left to the personal discretion of the monarch this power was used by Victor Emanuel, in several instances at least, to annul the transactions and dealings in private property which had taken place under the hated revolutionary rule. Complaints were made to the allied powers that they amounted to a violation of the provisions of the treaty of Paris. The discontent of the old republicans was increased by the manifest exclusion of those who had been employed under the French government, from their fair share of patronage and promotion, perhaps even more so by the unwise and churlish order which prohibited the use of the decoration of the cross of the legion of honour or of the iron crown. This narrow-minded prohibition deprived some of the bravest of those veterans, whose services to France the proclamation of Schwartzenberg had promised should be remembered only as proofs of their valour, of the poor satisfaction of exhibiting the hard-won honours which formed the only recompence for the spent years of their existence, their sufferings, and their wounds.

In the laws relating to religion, Victor Emanuel inherited all the prejudices of his house. His first act on arriving at Turin was to close the universities ;

they were not opened until they were placed under the direction of the Jesuits, to whom on their restoration the whole control over Piedmontese education was assigned. The laws against heretics were renewed with all their intolerance. Not even the intercession of Lord William Bentinck could obtain for the Protestants of the Waldensian valleys the slightest relaxation in those laws. To them the restoration of the ancient sovereigns brought nothing but oppression. After the perfect freedom and equality which they had enjoyed under the government of France, they found themselves sent back to those oppressive laws, which barely tolerated their existence within certain districts, and even within those limits could scarcely be said to permit them the free exercise of their religion.⁴⁰

Still further to show his devotion to the Holy See, the king dispatched to the Pope as special ambassador, a nobleman noted for his attachment to the Church. The Marquis D'Azeglio was sent to Rome with a mission which charged him to express to the Pontiff "the great desire which the King of Sardinia entertained to do all in his power to repair the serious injuries which the Catholic religion had suffered both by the toleration granted to other religions, as by the scandal caused to Piedmont by the government of the French, and by that spirit of independence of the Holy Apostolic See which had been spread through the people to the injury of that respect and devotion to the Chair of St. Peter

⁴⁰ Under the Code Napoleon the Protestant inhabitants of the Piedmontese valleys enjoyed perfect equality. The old laws of Piedmont confined them to the valleys. They did not permit them to be physicians or advocates.—*Baird's History of Italian Protestantism.*

which the king himself professed, and which he now wished should also be the profession of his subjects."

The boon which the marquis was charged to obtain from the Pontiff was the re-establishment of all the ancient Piedmontese bishoprics, the organisation of a plan for the restoration of the monastic orders in their pristine numbers and splendour, and the foundation of two colleges of Jesuits in the territories of the king.

The court of Rome received these professions with great satisfaction, and took the opportunity of pressing upon the representative of the pious monarch, the duty of acknowledging the feudal supremacy of the Holy See, by payment of the annual tribute of a golden chalice, which it was alleged was the right of the successors of St. Peter. The national pride of the Sardinian king was touched. Ready as he was to pay all spiritual obedience to Rome, he refused to acknowledge his kingdom as a fief of its bishop. The demand was followed by long and elaborate arguments between the minister of the Pope and the representative of the king. The concession of the annual homage of this feudal service was in the end peremptorily refused, and in the month of October the Marquis D'Azeglio sought permission to retire from a position in which, he stated, that he found it impossible to reconcile the conflicting claims of loyalty to his sovereign, with that duty of implicit obedience which he owed to the Holy See.

Before he left Rome, he had manifested his own devotion by a sacrifice far greater than that which was demanded of his king. His eldest son renounced the

honours and the possessions of an illustrious and wealthy family, and was among the first of the novices admitted into the restored Order of Loyola.

Thus completely, within a few months after his return, had the king restored all the former civil and ecclesiastical state of things. He believed that he could treat the French revolution as if it had never been, and that a few royal ordinances could undo all the lessons of its teaching, and reverse all the changes of sentiment and opinion it had wrought.

Yet with all these reactionary proceedings, the government of the new king was personally mild. When the minister of the Austrian police handed to Victor Emanuel a list of the persons suspected of Jacobinism and freemasonry—such was the odd collocation of offences—the king thanked him for his trouble, burst into a laugh, and tore up the precious document before his eyes. Arbitrary as was his system, he was far from administering it in a tyrannical or sanguinary spirit, and even those interferences with the course of justice which struck at the security of all private right, provoked no great unpopularity, except with the adherents of the French government, against whom they were generally directed.

The just complaints of these persons were, however, influential enough to reach the courts of the allied sovereigns, to whom complaints were made of the reactionary system pursued in Piedmont, and Count Joseph Le Maistre, the king's representative at the court of Russia, was obliged to address to Alexander a long memorial in which he endeavoured, not very success-

fully, to show that his sovereign had really adopted a liberal policy since his restoration to his throne. There is little reason to doubt that the character of his policy had at all events its influence in preventing the success of those representations which his ambassador at London, the Count D'Aglié, addressed to Lord Castlereagh claiming a larger accession of territory to strengthen the Sardinian State.

However much we may condemn his policy, great allowance must be made for the position of the king. In the reaction against the tyranny of France, old principles and old opinions had resumed to a great extent their sway. There were many who saw in the marvellous events of the revolution only the lesson that absolute government was essential to public order and the safety of states. The brother of the Princess Lamballe had some excuse for regarding popular license with horror ; and his own and his brother's calamities not unnaturally impressed him with a belief that the first duty of the restored monarchy was to undo all that had been accomplished by the invasion of the legions of France.

On the whole, it does not appear that the restoration of arbitrary power produced among his own people any very great or very general discontent. The institutions which were destroyed had won no attachment from the Piedmontese. Their destruction was rather looked on with satisfaction as the downfall of a foreign domination, from which the restoration of their national princes, and even of their national laws was a relief. The resumption of an absolute system of rule was marked

by none of those acts of individual oppression which are far more effectual than the establishment or overthrow of any abstract principle of government in exciting discontent. The masses of the Piedmontese people were content to live under any government that left them in quiet ; they rejoiced in the restoration of that ancient line of sovereigns under whom in former times their country had been prosperous and happy. In the breast of the Piedmontese loyalty and a love of their sovereigns was always a stronger passion than the love of freedom, and in the first feeling of joy at the return of their ancient dynasty, they acquiesced in the reenactment of all the ancient laws and in the restoration of all the former customs which that return appeared of necessity to involve.

Restored to his hereditary dominions, Victor Emanuel made every effort to press upon the allies the necessity of increasing his power, by assigning to him territories, which would make his kingdom strong enough to be independent. This object was one that had long engaged the thoughts of European statesmen. The Russian emperor had recorded his opinion to that effect.⁴¹ Pitt, in 1805, had drawn up a memorandum, in which he suggested that Genoa should be annexed to the Italian dominions of the King of Sardinia, and Dauphiny added to Savoy.⁴² The Count D'Aglie, the

⁴¹ Gallenga, vol. iii. p. 303.

⁴² " In the combinations prepared by Russia in case of victory, it was intended to constitute a Cisalpine realm formed of Piedmont without Savoy but comprising Genoa, Lombardy, and the Venetian States. The realm to be conferred upon the House of Savoy, as the nucleus of an Independent Italy in the future. In the mean time this State was to be united by an Italian con-

minister of Victor Emanuel at the court of London, pressed strongly on the English cabinet the importance of large additions to the Piedmontese territories. An able and elaborate memoir was placed by this minister in the hands of Lord Castlereagh ;⁴³ and D'Aglié appears so far to have succeeded in impressing his views on English statesmen, that agents of the foreign office were privately sent to Lombardy, to collect the opinions of the people upon the subject of a union with Piedmont ;⁴⁴ and something like an intimation was given to the Sardinian envoy, that the cession of Lombardy, as far as the Adige, would be proposed by the representatives of England at the congress.⁴⁵

The memorandum of the Sardinian minister pointed out, in plain terms, the danger to the independence of Italy which would result from the preponderance of Austrian power. He urged that the real security for Italian independence, and therefore for European independence, would be the formation of a kingdom in Northern Italy strong enough to be a barrier against ambitious designs, either on the part of Austria or France. In an interview with the Sardinian minister, Lord Castlereagh appeared convinced by the reasonings of his memoir ; but added, that his chief embarrassment

federation to the kingdom of the Two Sicilies—to the Pope as Grand Chancellor of the confederation—to the kingdom of Etruria and to the lesser states of Lucca, Ragusa, Malta, and the Ionian Islands. The kings of the Two Sicilies and Piedmont were to be in turns presidents of the confederation ; Savoy, the Valteline, and the Grisons were to form a Swiss Canton.”—*Cantù, Histoire de Cent Ans*, vol. ii. p. 342.

⁴³ See this memoir, at length, *post*, vol. ii. chap. viii.

⁴⁴ Farini, lib. iii. s. 6 ; Gualterio.

⁴⁵ Gallenga, vol. iii. p. 304 ; Sclopis, p. 181—173.

arose from the policy pursued on his restoration by the King of Sardinia himself.⁴⁶

These representations of the Sardinian minister were probably influential in preventing the success of the Austrian claims upon the High Novarese. To the west of Lake Maggiore, and running far into the highlands which lie at the base of the chain of the St. Gothard—this district forms the natural protection of the plain of Piedmont. The claims of Austria to the possession of this district were pressed, not only at the Congress of Vienna, but, as we shall see, upon subsequent occasions, when the imperial cabinet supposed their demands more likely to meet with support.

The Sardinian monarch received, however, the most important acquisition ever attached to his domains. By the annexation of the territories of the Genoese republic to those of Piedmont, unquestionably the grand object of strengthening Sardinia was attained. Whether this object justified the allied sovereigns in adopting the arrangement in which sovereign power destroyed the nationality of this ancient republic, is a question upon which the opinion of Europe was divided. It was one that especially concerned England, to whose arms the French troops had surrendered the possession of Genoa,

⁴⁶ Lord Castlereagh, after having read Count D'Aglié's letter, appeared convinced of the advantage that would result to Europe from adding to the territories of the kingdom of Sardinia, and held out expectations that something more than Liguria would be given; and, at the same time, manifested his vexation at the mode of government adopted by the court of Turin. Parting with the ambassador, he said, "I must confess to you, my lord, that the policy of your king, and the mode of government he has adopted to his people, places us in great embarrassment."—*Farini, Storia D'Italia*, vol. i. p. 99.

and whose general had re-established the ancient government ; and had, it was said, impliedly pledged the faith of his nation to the continuance of its freedom.

Genoa was one of the three great maritime republics of Italy which, for centuries, commanded the commerce of the world, and disputed only with each other the sovereignty of the seas. With Venice and Pisa she had divided the wealth which the Crusades had poured into the ports to whom belonged the carrying trade that attended the transport and commissariat of the armaments of Christendom. With these ports she shared, in later years, the gains which belonged to the monopoly of the commerce of the East. Pera, the suburb of Constantinople, was a colony of Genoese merchants. She disputed the possession of Tenedos and Cyprus in long and sanguinary wars. Corsica submitted to her dominion, until surrendered to France in 1724. On the far-off shores of Asia, and even on those which bounded the stormy waters of the Euxine, commerce had borne her flag. The Tartar chiefs of Southern Russia only destroyed her colonies in the Crimea, when the conquest of Constantinople by the Turks had made them useless by closing against her navy the passage of the Dardanelles.

Genoa, like Venice, gave shelter to those who fled from the desolating inroads of the barbarian hordes. The rugged heights of the Apennines isolated the Ligurian city on the western shores almost as completely as the waters of the lagunes did the colony that took refuge in the islands of Rialto. One solitary and difficult defile of the Bochetta was the pass to the shore

where rose Genoa the Superb. Behind the shelter, and probably the concealment of her mountains, Genoa enjoyed an isolation as complete as that which Venice found among her shoals.

The site of the city apparently presented few advantages except its isolated position, and the magnificent harbour which lay at its base. But Venice and Genoa abundantly prove that the difficulty of access by land, which would be fatal in modern times to a commercial city, presented no obstacle to the growth of mercantile greatness in the days when rapidity of transport was not among the requirements of trade. Against the barren heights of the Apennines rose the palaces of those who were literally merchant princes—the nobles of a city which knew only the aristocracy of commerce. A great population was soon attracted to the abode of mercantile enterprise and wealth. The city itself bore ample evidences of the prosperity with which merchandise had enriched it. “Genoa the Superb,” and the “City of Palaces,” were the names by which familiar language expressed the admiration of Italy for the splendour of its mansions, and the beauty of its unrivalled architecture. Even in its altered condition it retains the splendour of the past. Built almost on the last slope of the Apennines, which shelter it from the winds of the north-east, it rises from the very shore of the Tuscan Sea in a succession of noble terraces, on which stand palaces of that pure and dazzling whiteness for which the marble of the district is renowned. Stretching in a crescent along the line of its harbour, Genoa presents to the eye of the visitor a panorama of

grandeur and of beauty with which few cities in the world can compare.

In its earlier institutions Genoa, like other Italian cities that existed at the first period of the empire, followed the republican liberties of ancient Rome. Charlemagne placed it under the rule of counts. In the year 1096, the citizens asserted their independence, and established a republic which, under many vicissitudes, with occasional interruptions from foreign interference, may be said to have maintained its existence to the time of the first invasion of Italy by the arms of republican France.

In the period of the deepest depression of Italy two incidents in the history of Genoa redeem her annals from obscurity, and elevate her character above the low level to which the country had sunk. In the settlements of Italian affairs that were accomplished by the treaties of Château Cambresis and Aix-la-Chapelle, Genoa preserved her independence. Upon each occasion she owed this to the virtue and wisdom of her own sons. First, perhaps, in rank as in time, we must place the lofty patriotism of the great citizen Andrew Doria, when he declined the proffered sovereignty of his country, and obtaining instead the independence of Genoa as the reward of his services to Charles V., lived a private citizen among the people over whom he might have reigned as their prince.


History records no nobler instance of self-denial than is found in the conduct of this illustrious patriot, who chose the perpetuation of his country's freedom, in preference to securing its hereditary sovereignty for

himself and his descendants. The glory of that noble sacrifice cannot be marred by any defects which he left in those republican institutions which his influence with the emperor had preserved. Two centuries afterwards, when all spirit and liberty appeared to have passed from the Italian soil—the countrymen of Andrew Doria redeemed the darkness of the period by an act of heroism which proved them not unworthy of the inheritance which he had bequeathed to them. In the wars which preceded the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, the inhabitants of Genoa had taken part against Austria, chiefly in opposition to Piedmont, whose hostility they feared. In 1745 the reverses of the Bourbonists and the retreat of the French army into Provence, left them exposed to the vengeance of their powerful foes. An overwhelming Austrian and Piedmontese army invaded their city. A British squadron blockaded their port. The senate capitulated or rather surrendered unconditionally to the besieging host. The troops were given up as prisoners of war, and the senate undertook to send the Doge and six of their body to make their submission at the footstool of Maria Theresa. Adorno, the Austrian general, entered Genoa a conqueror with an army of 15,000 men. Their occupation lasted several months. It was marked by more than the usual insolence of conquering troops. Exactions of unparalleled amount impoverished the citizens—the lawless excesses of the soldiery were left unpunished by their superiors. The haughty Genoese were made to feel the bitter humiliation of the vanquished. As is frequently the case an outrage to an individual

provoked the people to the redress of their public wrongs.

One of the Austrian officers struck with his cane a citizen, who happened to be passing in the streets when a gun-carriage broke down, and who refused to comply with the imperious demand which was made upon him to assist the soldiers in its reparation. The sense of freedom was roused at the insult, and the blow was resented by one that left the officer prostrate on the ground. The soldiers attempted to punish the assailant of their superior, but the mob of Genoese retaliated with a shower of stones. The conflict soon became a mortal one, and in a few hours the whole population rushed upon the Austrian soldiers wherever they were to be found. In vain their commanders attempted to bring their discipline to bear. In the narrow streets of the city they were assaulted by all the missiles which rage supplied to the infuriated inmates of the houses along which they passed. Every house and every palace in Genoa was filled with men determined to conquer the insolent invaders or to die. Within twenty-four hours the unprecedented exploit was achieved by which an unconcerted rising of an unarmed populace drove from their city a numerous and disciplined body. The Austrian soldiers left behind them no less than eight thousand of their comrades slain by the people. In their flight they abandoned all their artillery and stores.

The peasantry of the surrounding district joined in the pursuit, by which the Austrians were driven beyond the mountain barriers of the state. All the munitions



of war of the enemy had fallen into the hands of this hastily raised army, who thus found two arsenals, that of Genoa and that of its invaders, at their command. The cannon of the Austrians were placed on the ramparts which already bristled with those of the Genoese. The guns were dragged to the mountain heights, and soon commanded every pass through the defiles, and while the miserable deputies were endeavouring at Vienna to appease imperial wrath, by representing this glorious exploit as the work of the rabble, the liberties and independence of Genoa were achieved.

All classes now joined in resistance to the invasion of the returning Austrian army, which they well knew would inflict upon their heroic city the vengeance of extermination. The treasured jewels of families in which they had been heirlooms for centuries were eagerly brought by the fair owners as offerings to the national treasury—the noblest citizens served as private soldiers on the ramparts and in the fortresses on the hills. As the city became invested, every householder submitted to a voluntary short allowance, that their provisions might last throughout the siege. The besieging troops were repulsed in every attack, and at last a French army arrived again in Italy and compelled the Austrians to retire.

Next year the potentates of Europe recognised the independence of Genoa, in the provisions of the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle.

In 1796 the French took advantage of disturbances, excited probably by themselves, in order to establish in Genoa democratic freedom by their arms. A

republic was formed, including all the territories of the state, and bearing the name of the Ligurian. Its history was the same as that of the other republics, which were indebted for their existence to the revolutionary propagandism of France. Framed on the model of the French, it rested on the widest basis of equality and the rights of man. The sovereign people numbered in their citizens not only the inhabitants of the town, but all the population of the province. The republic lasted until 1805, when the senate were compelled to seek incorporation with the newly formed empire of Napoleon, and the department of Liguria was added to the divisions of imperial France.

It is scarcely worth while to notice the short interruption to the French dominion, which occurred in 1799. In that year Massena had flung his army into Genoa; besieged by an Austrian army and blockaded by an English squadron, under Lord Keith, he was obliged to capitulate. The victory of Marengo and the consequent convention of Montebello very soon restored the French sovereignty. It continued until, in the very last days of Napoleon's power, indeed after that power was at an end in France, Genoa was surrendered by the French commander to the British arms.

On the 29th of March, 1814, Lord William Bentinck landed at Spezzia, with an army of English and Sicilians of about 12,000 men. His banners bore on them the words, almost possessing a magic influence, "Independence of Italy," and in glowing proclamations he

called on all Italians to unite with him in achieving the freedom and independence of their native land.⁴⁷

Advancing through the romantic defiles of the Apennines, he drove the French from every position they attempted to defend ; and, within a month from his landing at Spezzia, his invading army had occupied the heights immediately above the town. The French garrison were driven within the ramparts. All preparations were made to carry them by cannonade and assault. On the same day the naval squadron of Sir E. Pellew cast anchor in the bay, prepared to second the land attack by a simultaneous bombardment from the sea. Two ships of the line and four gun-brigs had previously accompanied the expedition, and their efforts materially contributed to the dislodgement of the French from their position outside the ramparts.

⁴⁷ This proclamation has been frequently referred to :—

“ Rise ! Italians, rise ! Behold us here to aid you. Behold us here to remove from your necks the iron yoke of Buonaparte. Portugal, Spain, Sicily, Holland, will declare to you the greatness of England’s generosity, the purity of her disinterested zeal. Spain has been freed by her own valour, and by our aid ; both have united in completing a work the noblest among the noble. The French being driven forth from her happy fields, liberty and independence have there fixed their seat. Under the shadow of England has Sicily been screened from the common misfortunes ; through the benevolence of a virtuous prince she has passed from servitude to liberty, and now demonstrates the glory and felicity which a free constitution confers. Holland also struggled for freedom. Will Italy alone remain in bondage ? Will Italians alone direct their ensanguined swords against each other, to subject their country to the will of a tyrant ? To you, soldiers of Italy, we especially address our words—to you, in whose hands is placed the completion of a generous enterprise. We ask you not to come over to us ; our voices exhort you only to assert your rights, to re-establish your liberties. We will applaud you afar off ; we will join you when summoned ; and, if you add your force to ours, Italy may, perhaps, be restored to her ancient destiny ; and perhaps the same fame may be won by her which has been won by Spain.”—*Proclamation of Lord William Bentinck, March 4th, 1814.*

The evening before the day on which the cannonade was to commence, a deputation of the inhabitants visited Lord William Bentinck, begging of him to postpone the bombardment for a few days, as the accounts from Paris made it certain that within this time the war would be at an end. The British general replied that these were arguments to be addressed to the French commander and not to him. "It was for the French general to abandon a town he could not defend, and for him to push an advantage which fortune had put within his reach."⁴⁸

In these days of rapid communication, when intelligence is carried on the wings and with the speed of the lightning, we are almost startled at the statements which tell us, that while the abdication of Napoleon had been completed at Paris on the 5th, Genoa on the 17th of April was on the point of being laid in ruins to detach it from the empire of France. For nearly a fortnight that empire had ceased to exist. The useless waste of human life was happily spared. The remonstrances of the Genoese with the French commander were effectual. On the following day a capitulation was signed. The French garrison marched out with the honours of war. All the French marine in Genoa, including several ships of war, was surrendered to the English navy. Genoa itself was given up to the combined English and Sicilian troops.

The first act of Lord William Bentinck on entering was to issue a proclamation to the people, in the beginning of which he declared that "it was the

⁴⁸ Lord William Bentinck's Despatches, *Annual Register*, 1814.

universal desire of the Genoese nation to return to their ancient government, under which it enjoyed liberty, prosperity, and independence," and also that this desire was conformable to the principles acknowledged by the high allied powers to re-establish their ancient rights and privileges." Based upon this statement was the announcement that the constitution which existed in Genoa in 1797 was restored, and a provisional government appointed to carry its principles into full effect.

However this proclamation may have conveyed to the sanguine Genoese in the first transports of their joy, that England was pledged to secure for them their ancient government; sinister rumours soon reached them that in the informal deliberations which had taken place at Paris, the annexation of their country to Piedmont had been already resolved. Upon the grounds of general policy the expediency of such a step seemed evident enough. Considering the importance of strengthening Sardinia, the annexation of the Genoese territory was a necessity. Extending at the head of the Gulf of Genoa, from Spezzia to Nice, that narrow strip of land cut off from Piedmont for that long distance her seaboard. It might be said to deprive her throughout a great portion of her territory of that access to the ocean which is one of the great elements of national strength. Without the possession of Genoa, Piedmont had only a few miles of coast, and but one seaport, that of Nice. The want of this territory was to Piedmont more than a loss, it was a danger. In hostile hands Genoa at once exposed Piedmont to invasion,

its occupation by France at any time made of no avail Sardinia's prized command of the passes of the Alps.

It was not to be expected that considerations like these, however they weighed with the statesmen who were about to deal with the destinies of Europe, would have much influence over the excited feelings of the Genoese. With them the annexation to Piedmont was the subjugation of their country to a foreign yoke—a subjugation rendered more galling by the contempt with which these proud republican patricians had long looked down upon the Savoyards and Piedmontese. Every effort was made to arrest their inevitable doom. An envoy was despatched to Paris personally to press their remonstrance both upon the Emperor Alexander and upon Lord Castlereagh. An appeal was made to English faith, supposed to be pledged by the acts of Lord William Bentinck, and a manly and dignified protest to all the powers of Europe, recorded on the part of the still proud republic her denial of their right to give away the freedom and independence which had come down to Genoa by a title more ancient than any of their crowns.⁵⁰

To these general arguments there could only be offered one reply: Genoa had become French by conquest, and by conquest it had passed from Napoleon to the disposal of the allies. The nature of the transactions which occurred at the time of the surrender was relied on by the English ministers in the subsequent discussion, as entirely excluding any complaint as to the future disposal of Genoa, and reducing it to the ordinary

⁵⁰ *Annual Register*, 1814, *History*, p. 85.

case of a surrender of territory to victorious military force. As to the alleged violation of faith on the part of England, it was replied that, if no compact previous to the surrender could be established, the question of good faith was at an end ; but, giving even the fullest and most stringent effect to declarations made after he was in possession of the town, it was denied that Lord William Bentinck had ever pledged the faith of England, or that he had power to do so. His proclamation was alleged to mean nothing more than the establishment of a present arrangement, the permanence of which must depend entirely upon the resolve of others whose deliberations he had no power to control, and whose intentions, even if they could then have been formed, he had not the slightest authority to represent.⁵¹

A protocol of the 14th December 1814 recorded the formal determination of the Congress of Vienna that Genoa was henceforth to be incorporated with the Sardinian States. The intelligence was brought to Genoa by the Marquis de Carail, aide-de-camp to the

⁵¹ Whatever may be thought of the transactions relating to Genoa, it appears plain that Lord William Bentinck exceeded his instructions even in the steps which he did take.

On the 15th of February, 1814, Lord Castlereagh addressed him a despatch, in which, after instructing him that the British cabinet earnestly wished to see both the Grand Duke of Tuscany and the King of Sardinia restored to their dominions, he continued,—“ You will studiously abstain from encouraging any measure which might commit the court or the allies with respect to the ultimate disposition of any of the other territories in the north of Italy, the destination of which must remain to be discussed at a peace.”—*Despatch of Lord Castlereagh, Feb. 15, 1814.—Parliamentary Paper, 1821.*

On the 28th of December previously, Lord Bathurst had written to him,—“ Provided it be clearly with the concurrence of the inhabitants, you may take possession of Genoa in the name and on the behalf of his Sardinian Majesty.” *Lord Bathurst's Despatch.—Castlereagh Papers.*

King of Sardinia, and son of the minister representing Sardinia at the congress. At the same time a letter was delivered from Lord Castlereagh to General Dalrymple, who had succeeded Lord William Bentinck in the command of the British troops. In this letter the general was desired to take all proper steps to hand over Genoa to his Sardinian majesty ; and, for this purpose, to regard his corps as auxiliary to the troops of the king.

The letter to General Dalrymple attempted to excuse or at least extenuate to the Genoese the apparent severity of the act. "I exceedingly regret," wrote Lord Castlereagh, "as well as do all the ministers, the not being able to preserve to Genoa a separate existence without the risk of weakening the system adopted for Italy, and consequently exposing its safety. But we are persuaded that, by the mode adopted, we have provided much more strongly for the future tranquillity of Genoa and the prosperity of her commerce. The generous disposition of the King of Sardinia, whose ardent desire it is to fulfil as much as possible the wishes of the Genoese, will be to them the most certain pledge of their being placed under the protection of a liberal and paternal government. I have no doubt that, under these circumstances, the Genoese of every class will receive the decision as a benefit, and will conform to the present arrangements which will conciliate their own interests with those of the rest of Europe."⁵²

The people of Genoa received with intense indignation the decree that thus destroyed their independence.

⁵² Annual Register, 1814, History, p. 85.

The British government was openly accused of perfidy. Genoa was one scene of universal discontent. Resistance, however, even if it were thought of, would have been in vain. The authority of the Sardinian monarch was quietly established, and under the terrors of British cannon the standard of Savoy floated on the walls that had once been those of the Genoese republic.

Early in 1815 this transaction gave rise to debates in both houses of the British parliament. Resolutions strongly condemning the annexation of Genoa to Piedmont were moved in the house of lords by the Marquis of Buckingham, and in the commons by Sir James Mackintosh. In the upper house they were defeated by a majority of 111 to 39, in the lower by 171 to 60.⁵³ The annexation was, of course, formally ratified by the general treaty of Vienna, and the title of Duke of Genoa was added to those already borne by the Sardinian king.

Thus, after a long interval another step was made in that process of annexation by which the territories of the House of Savoy had been gradually enlarged. Imperceptibly, almost, had those territories expanded from the valleys of Susa and Aosta, until they included all the plains of Piedmont. The treaty of Utrecht had given to Piedmont the long coveted possessions of Alessandria and Montferrat. A century had passed when Genoa, with her dominions, was annexed by the Congress of Vienna. In times more recent, after a second interval of half a century, we have seen another long cherished project carried out. The territory which

⁵³ Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, 1815.

D'Aglie claimed in vain from Lord Castlereagh has been gained by events which no one could have conjectured or foreseen. The project was far older than the days of the Congress of Vienna. Charles Emanuel I. had struggled for it, Henry IV. of France had pointed it out to him as the natural destiny of his race. Amadeus VIII. (A.D. 1434) had formed the plan of uniting Milan with Piedmont, and establishing a kingdom of Northern Italy.⁵⁴ The design was abandoned by that ambitious but prudent prince. It was reserved for his descendant four centuries afterwards to carry that project into effect.

This is not all. Once more we see the offers of voluntary cession from independent states which in the earlier period of their history added to their rising territories Cuneo and Nice. In 1859 we appear to recall the scenes of 1384, and after the lapse of five centuries we find Tuscany seeking the privilege of that incorporation with Piedmont which was long ago asked as a boon by the citizens of Nice.

Whatever is to be the future destiny of a kingdom whose origin and progress have been marked by so many strange adventures, we cannot but see in the long con-

⁵⁴ Philip Maria Visconti, who was Duke of Milan in the beginning of the tenth century, was married to a daughter of Amadeus VIII., the tenth Duke of Savoy. Philip Maria had no children; and, in 1434, Amadeus proposed an alliance between Savoy and Milan upon the terms that, on the death of either of the sovereigns without heirs, the other should inherit the dominions of both.

Instead of acceding to this proposal, Philip Maria threw himself into the arms of Sforza, whose family succeeded that of the Visconti in the lordship of Milan. At a later period, Charles Emanuel I. had nearly accomplished the union of the duchy of Milan to Piedmont. In 1585 he married the sister of Philip II., king of Spain, and as part of her dowry the duchy of Milan was settled on her eldest son. The first-born died in infancy; the court of Spain denied that they were bound by any agreement in favour of the next.

tinuance of this dynasty another instance of that which seems the universal law of human affairs—a law that regulates small principalities as well as great. Power, to be permanent, must be slow in its growth. Empires that are rapidly constructed are almost as rapidly broken up. It is in slow and gradual acquisition that the foundations of permanence are laid. Rome had not conquered Italy at the end of 500 years. Russia has extended her frontiers with slow but sure advance. The progress both of Savoy and Hapsburgh illustrates in modern times how power by degrees is surely consolidated and built up. On the other hand, the empire of the great Alexander can hardly be said to have survived himself. That of Charlemagne scarcely outlasted two generations of his descendants, and Napoleon lived to see all his mighty conquests scattered to the winds.

In the period that has elapsed since the Congress of Vienna, the princes of Savoy have alone among Italian sovereigns maintained the Italian interest. All others represented not Italy, but one or other of the European powers. One Spanish Bourbon had been placed on the throne of the Sicilies. Lucca was assigned as the temporary possession of another. At Parma an Austrian archduchess occupied the seat of the Farnese. Tuscany had been handed over to the younger branches of the imperial line of Lorraine. In the archduke who ruled at Modena no one thought of recognising a representative of the House of Este. From the roll of Italian sovereigns the old names of the country had disappeared. The princes of Savoy, alone among them all, could trace a possession in Italy for even one hundred years.

Among those sovereigns Victor Emanuel stood alone. The inheritor of an independent sovereignty of eight hundred years, was actuated by feelings very different from those of princes, all of whose thrones were more or less connected with the successive invasions of the foreigner. From the days of the treaty of Château Cambresis, it had become the traditional policy of his family to regard themselves as the guardians of Italy against foreign influence. "I know that these foreigners hate me," said Emanuel Philibert, "but no Italian state, least of all Venice, can be indifferent to my fall." These traditions had descended to Victor Emanuel with his crown. No sympathy for arbitrary power was able to overcome them ; and when free institutions became the symbol of Italian nationality, rather than desert its cause, a sovereign of Piedmont granted them to his people.

Strange, we have said, would have been the prophecy which would have predicted to the Lombard league, that when every free city in Italy had fallen, a prince of Savoy should alone maintain the cause of her independence. Stranger still is the destiny which ordained that of all the sovereigns whom the abdication of Napoleon restored, but one could justly claim to be an Italian prince, that one deriving the historic title of his family from a principality on the other side of the Alps.

CHAPTER VII.



Naples and Sicily—Condition under Spanish rule, insurrections against it—Charles Bourbon—He confers the crown upon his third son Ferdinand—Long and eventful reign of Ferdinand—His neglected education—His early pursuits—Marriage with Caroline of Austria—French revolution—League of Italian sovereigns proposed by Naples—Treaty with France—Severities practised at Naples—Lady Hamilton—Lord Nelson's visit to Naples—King of Naples joins coalition against France—Letter to Sardinian minister—Neapolitan troops occupy Rome—Invitation to the Pope to return—Ferdinand's flight from Rome—Change of dresses with the Duke of Ascoli—Retaking of Rome by the French—Championet invades the Neapolitan territory—Proclamation of the king—Desperate resistance of the peasantry to the French—Flight of the king to Sicily on board Lord Nelson's ship—Remonstrances of the people—The French enter Naples—Resistance of the Lazzaroni—St. Januarius—Parthenopean republic proclaimed.

No portion of the recent history of Italy presents to us incidents of deeper interest than those which are recorded in the modern annals of the kingdoms of Sicily and Naples. In no Italian state were the vicissitudes of the French revolutionary wars so severely felt, in none has the settlement effected by the Congress of Vienna produced more unsatisfactory results. In none have there been the same struggles on the part of the people to free themselves from the dominion of their rulers.

Ferdinand I. of Sicily and IV. of Naples, was on the throne of these realms at the commencement of the

French revolution. In Sicily he maintained his dominion throughout all the changes and chances of its wars. From Naples he had been driven for a few months in 1799. A second time he was compelled to leave it in 1806, and his exile then lasted for nine years. Upon each occasion he found refuge in Sicily : upon each occasion protected by British arms.

The Neapolitan people saw in his person reigning over them, the first time for more than two centuries, a sovereign of Italian birth. He was the son and successor of that Don Carlos, better known in Italian history as Charles Bourbon, who in 1734 had won with his sword the kingdoms which European diplomacy had assigned as the inheritance of the House of Austria.

For two centuries previously these unhappy kingdoms had been placed under the worst of all possible forms of government, that of the viceroys of a distant despot. Descending from Charles V. to his son, the gloomy and cruel fanatic Philip II., they were visited during his long reign with the evils which the rule of a despot in politics and a bigot in religion was calculated to inflict. Under his successors their state was not improved. Exorbitant taxation reduced the common people to the want of the common necessities of life. Imposts upon meat and bread compelled them to live upon fruits. It was the attempt to impose a tax upon these latter which provoked that bold insurrection of Massaniello, which the charms of music and the drama have made familiar to the lovers of the stage. Fifty years previously an enthusiast friar had excited the people of Calabria to strike a blow for their freedom. These revolts, like two others which

were attempted in Sicily were suppressed,¹ and Spanish dominion continued to oppress and waste the fairest provinces of Italy, until the death of the last of that branch of the House of Hapsburgh severed the tie that had so long bound them to the Spanish crown.²

Through the long and gloomy period of that subjugation

¹ In 1674, the people of Messina, provoked by a violation of their municipal privileges, rose against their Spanish oppressors in an insurrection which was not suppressed for four years.

The Messinese in this revolt were supported by Louis XIV., who was at Messina proclaimed King of Sicily. After four years struggle he basely and treacherously abandoned the Sicilian insurgents to their fate. The vengeance of the Spaniards inflicted on Messina evils from which it has never since altogether recovered.—*Giannone ; Muratori ; Perceval's Italy.*

In 1647 a scarcity at Palermo had provoked a popular rising, which a mixture of kindness and firmness on the part of the viceroy easily suppressed.—*Muratori, in anno.*

In the same year the imposition of excessive taxes provoked in Naples the revolt which was headed by the poor fisherman, Tomaso Aniello, better known as Massaniello. The best account of Massaniello's insurrection is to be found in Reumont's "History of the Carafas of Maddaloni." See also Giannone. Muratori, in anno, 1647.

Fifty years before Tomaso, Campanella, a Dominican friar who had incurred, either for heterodoxy, or irregularities of life, the penalties of the Roman inquisition, excited a revolt. Released from their prisons, he preached in Calabria a crusade of civil and religious liberty, in which he found supporters in the brothers of his own Order. He is said to have been seven times put to the torture, and to have passed twenty-seven years of his life in prison.—*Giannone ; Colletta's History of Naples ; Perceval's Italy.*

Campanella must have been a man of very superior attainments. Some of his writings have been republished in modern times. He warned his countrymen against the fatal mistake of trusting to foreign aid.

"Were the Italian relations quite different, no Italian prince ought to rely upon foreign aid, for he who comes does not come for love of us, but to take what we possess, or to dispute with others about it. Foreign aid is at all times an ill advised measure. It is folly in Italian princes to have faith in France, Spain, Germany, or other countries. They should place their reliance only in God, and in union with each other. The old prophets warned the Hebrew kings of it, and even the wicked Machiavelli is full of this doctrine."—*Fra Tomaso Campanella. Discorsi Politici al principi d'Italia : publi da P. Garzili, Naples, 1848.*

² For the oppression of the Spanish viceroys, see Giannone, and Reumont's "History of the Carafas." The Italian proverb said, that the viceroy "gnawed at Sicily, ate at Naples, and devoured at Milan."

tion the people both of Sicily and Naples successfully resisted the attempt to introduce among them the ferocious tribunal of the Spanish inquisition. So violently was the attempt resisted at Naples, that even the power of the Emperor Charles V. was obliged to give way, and permit his viceroy to retract the hateful decree by which the dreaded tribunal had been set up.

In the short period during which they had been ruled by the German princes of the House of Hapsburgh, the people of Naples and Sicily found no improvement of their condition. When Charles Bourbon distributed his proclamations, announcing that he had come to free them from the oppression of the Germans, he was received by all classes as their deliverer, and his conquest of the kingdom was hailed as a national triumph. Not the least of his recommendations to popular favour was his pledge that he would never permit the inquisition to be established.

Charles Bourbon was proclaimed King of Naples on the 15th of June, 1734. He was then but eighteen years of age. For twenty-five years he governed in a reign which was long remembered as one of energy and prudence. After that period the chances of family succession called him to the throne of Spain. Bound by the obligations of treaty not to unite his Italian and Spanish crowns, he appointed as his successor his third son. He had the misfortune of finding in his eldest an imbecile, and his second was therefore destined to succeed him as the wearer of the Spanish crown. On his third son Ferdinand he conferred the crown

of Sicily and Naples, and on the 6th of October, 1759, the youthful prince, a boy of only eight years old, received from his father the solemn investiture of his kingdom.

The ceremony is described as a remarkable one. Assembling the great officers of state and the barons of the kingdom, Charles transferred all his rights to the boy, whom he presented to them as their king. The deed by which he conferred upon him the kingdom was read. The council of regency was nominated, at the head of which was placed Tanucci, the wise and patriotic minister of the departing king. Charles then turned to the boy, who was now the sovereign of the two kingdoms, solemnly gave him his blessing, and placing in his hand the sword he himself had received from his father, as that father had from Louis XIV., he charged him to use it for the defence of religion and his subjects. "I charge your majesty," he continued, as the wondering eye of the boy dilated at the title, "I charge your majesty, solemnly before God, to love your subjects, to be true to your religion, to do justice and to love mercy." Before the evening sun went down upon the waters, Charles Bourbon on board a vessel of the Spanish fleet, was on his way to take possession of the more important inheritance to which he was called.

The little child who thus received a father's blessing, as that father placed him on the perilous elevation of a throne, outlived the French revolution. Ascending the throne in 1759, he died in 1825—the longest reign that is recorded of any European king.

He witnessed three revolutions in his capital, yet saw before his death the most absolute form of despotism restored. When, in 1815, he was recognised as sovereign by the allied powers, he could assert in his own person the title that is derived from an uninterrupted possession of very nearly sixty years. The interval between the beginning of his reign and its termination, almost exhausted the three-score years and ten of man's allotted life. Few of those who remembered his accession survived to follow him to the grave. Before that grave had closed on him, the early years of his reign were forgotten among the events of the remote history of the past.

The vicissitudes of his long and eventful reign possess an interest, especially for the English reader, of no ordinary kind. Their memories are associated with those of England's great naval hero. The retreat of the exiled monarch in Sicily was marked by the restoration to that island of the powers of a constitution, modelled on that of England. Protected and renovated under the influence of the British cabinet, a few years afterwards the freedom of Sicily was, with the acquiescence of that same cabinet, destroyed.

The closing years of this reign were identified with events of still more general interest. Restored to his dominions, Ferdinand lived to witness another revolution, memorable for having established Neapolitan liberty without violence, outrage, or bloodshed ; still more memorable for having called into action those principles of despotic combination on the part of monarchs, which, had they been persevered in, must

have crushed all hopes of improvement in the condition of the subjects of states in which absolute form of government prevails. The Neapolitan revolution of 1820, and the conferences of Troppau, Laybach, and Verona, connect the name of Ferdinand and of Naples with events of the deepest importance to the progress of liberty in every nation in Europe.

In Naples itself, his reign is unhappily associated with terrible remembrances. As we read of the revenge of the returning monarch, which has stained his annals deep with the dye of blood,—as we find him later in life destroying the constitution which he had solemnly sworn to maintain—we involuntarily turn back to that opening scene, when with a father's blessing, he received a father's solemn charge to do justice and love mercy. These certainly were not the qualities which were pre-eminently the characteristics of his reign.

In his boyhood the king had been singularly unfortunate ; an early elevation to the throne was not the only calamity of his infant years. Apprehensions of the mental disease, which had exhibited itself in more than one of his family, made his father adopt the prudent resolution that his infant brain should not be taxed by any forced education. When Charles departed for Spain, the tutors of the boy-king too faithfully adopted the precautions of his parent, and though nominally attended by the first preceptors of the age, the ruler of the Two Sicilies was permitted to grow up in fact without any education at all.

As Ferdinand advanced to man's estate, the symptoms which his father's watchful eye had detected, began to

manifest themselves, not indeed in mental aberration, but in that weakness of intellect, which when proceeding from physical disease is not inconsistent with a certain amount of cunning and occasional displays of shrewdness. In the hereditary taint of disease, we may perhaps find the origin and the excuse of those extraordinary freaks in which he often appeared in positions not very suitable to the dignity of a king. Some have not hesitated to find in the same melancholy source, if not an excuse, at least a palliation, for those acts of cruelty and treachery which seem inconsistent with a disposition that was not without its mixture of a coarse and rough good-nature.

It is not easy seriously to relate the incidents which are recorded upon authentic testimony of his habits and pursuits. Passionately attached to the sports of the field, a taste which he inherited from his father—he was ready, to the last hour of his life, to sacrifice any duty or neglect any business for the amusement of the chase, the net, or the gun. Even in middle age we are told of his dancing and shouting with childish glee round the heaps of his slaughtered game. One strong ground of his hostility to the liberal constitution established in Sicily, was the provision which abolished the ancient and most oppressive feudal privileges of the warren and the chase.

Such incidents we read without indignation. Well would it be for his character if the estimate we form of it, were to be based upon traits like these. Well would it have been for his subjects, if nothing worse could be alleged against his memory than the

numberless extravagances which are recorded upon testimonies, at once too numerous and too respectable, to permit us to believe the stories that are related of him to be mere caricatures. When we are gravely told of his resorting to the fish-market to dispose of the produce of a piscatory adventure attended with unusual good-luck, we can scarcely help regarding with surprise and contempt the picture of the sovereign standing in the disguise of a fisherman at his stall—imitating the manners, and rivalling the jokes of the denizens of a locality in all countries proverbial for the coarseness of its wit—bargaining with every chance customer for the highest price, with a skill which seemed dictated by an avarice for pence—and returning to his palace, exulting himself, and congratulated by his courtiers upon the dexterity and success with which he had huxtered the produce of his sports. This was not the only occasion of his appearance on terms of familiarity with the class whom we may well believe to have thronged round the royal stall. Mimicry was his only talent, and he displayed it to the exquisite delight of his attendants, in taking off the manners and accents of the lowest of his people. The king was quite ready to test the genuineness of his imitation by a strict comparison with the original; and in the streets of Naples the sovereign occasionally went among the rabble, assuming their language and their manners. Upon these occasions the Fescennine license was freely granted and assumed by the monarch in his intercourse with the populace, and as he walked through the admiring Lazzaroni they paid their sovereign the com-

pliment of saying that no one could distinguish him from one of themselves.

Like some of his prototypes among the Roman emperors, he prided himself upon his strength and skill in athletic exercises ; like them, he was not very choice in selecting his antagonists, and wrestlers and boxers of the same class as those who shared the contests of Commodus, were admitted to the honour of giving an easy victory to the athletic powers of the Neapolitan king.⁴

While perfecting himself in these gracious accomplishments, he was kept in ignorance of the information which the commonest education supplied.⁵ He could hardly be said to know how to read or write. At the meetings of his council, the use of writing

⁴ It is not easy to regard even with the indulgence of contempt, the incident of his old age, which is recorded upon unquestionable authority. In the year 1820, his brother, the ex-king of Spain, died at Naples. During his last illness, Ferdinand left Naples, and retired to Portici, where he devoted himself to the pleasures of the chase.

One morning, as he was leaving the palace with a hunting party, a messenger reached him with a letter from those in attendance upon his brother. The king left the letter unopened to await his return from the chase. Before he had gone far from the palace, a second messenger brought the intelligence that his brother was dying, and had expressed an earnest wish to see him before his end. Ferdinand asked the advice of his companions. "If," he said, "my brother is so very ill, he will die before I could reach him. If he should recover, he will greatly enjoy the game which we will kill." Upon this affectionate reasoning he determined that the message should not interrupt him in his sport.

Sir William A'Court was astonished by an invitation to join the royal party in a hunt at Portici, on the very day appointed for the funeral obsequies of the ex-king. The British ambassador excused himself by the necessity of his attendance at an august ceremony. In the church in which the funeral ceremony was going on, Sir William received a note from the king, desiring him to proceed straight from the church to join the royal party in the field.—*Colletta's History of Naples.*

⁵ The instances of his ignorance were almost incredible. Mr. Eustace, who pays royalty the compliment of saying that Ferdinand exactly possessed in

materials was strictly prohibited. The royal signature to documents of state was attached by means of a stamp, and even after his marriage, he was obliged in the simplest correspondence to employ the good offices of his queen. Affairs of state in his early days he left entirely to his ministers. As long as the management of the country was left in the hands of Tanucci, there was little in the government of Ferdinand of which his subjects could reasonably complain.

At the early age of eighteen there was formed for him that matrimonial connection which perhaps subsequent events justify us in including among the misfortunes of his youth. He had been already affianced in succession to two of the daughters of the Empress Maria Theresa, both of whom death had removed.⁶ Caroline, the next surviving sister, succeeded to the place of those who were gone, and, a very short time after the death of the second of her sisters, she arrived

intellectual capacity the happy medium that is suited for a sovereign, tells us that upon one occasion, when a courtier spoke before him of the power of the Turks, "No wonder they were powerful, since before the birth of our Saviour all men were Turks," was the sage observation of the model king.

When some one mentioned in his presence the fact that the English had once put their sovereign to death, the king indignantly denounced the story as an invention of the Jacobins, who wished to blacken the character of the English nation.—*Eustace's Classical Tour in Italy*, vol. ii. p. 312.

⁶ The death of the elder sister Josepha was attended with melancholy circumstances. As she was on the point of leaving Naples to be married, her mother insisted that she should perform the devotion of descending to the imperial vault beneath the convent of the Capuchins, and pray beside the coffins of her kindred. The unhappy girl remonstrated against being compelled to visit the chamber in which the body of one of her relatives who had just died of small-pox had been laid. The empress was inflexible; she accompanied her daughter to the vault, but the poor princess had hardly returned from its infected air when she was seized with the frightful disease to which she fell a victim in a few days.—*Coxe's History of the House of Austria*; *Michiel's Secret History of the Austrian Government*.

in Naples as its elect queen. Her imperial mother was not ignorant of the character of her daughter's future lord ; she had designated the match of the eldest daughter as a sacrifice of her child ; but, with that characteristic piety which always finds a religious motive for every act of worldly ambition, she consoled herself by the reflection, resting upon grounds not very evident, that the sacrifice would be for the good of her soul.⁷

Educated under the austere and rigid rule of her imperial mother, the young Queen of Naples found herself, when she had hardly grown from girlhood, suddenly transferred to be the centre of the attractions of a brilliant, but licentious court. High-spirited and proud, she was consigned to a husband whose coarseness disgusted her, and whose imbecility and cowardice she must have despised. The terms of her marriage contract contained a singular provision which entitled her to be present at the meetings of the councils of state ; and, after the birth of her son, she asserted her right with a spirit and determination that soon made her mistress of the kingdom. Tanucci, the guardian and guide of her husband's younger years, retired before an interference which he resented as inconsistent with the fundamental laws of the nation ; and, after a few years, his place was filled by Sir John Acton, an English gentleman who had entered the naval service, first of Tuscany, afterwards of Naples, and had the good or

⁷ "I regard poor Josepha as a political sacrifice. Provided she does her duty to God and her husband, and secures her salvation, I shall be satisfied even if she is unhappy."—*Letter to the Countess Linchenfried.*

bad fortune to attract the favours of the queen. The king became a cipher in state affairs — occupied entirely by his darling pursuit of the chase, or in still coarser pleasures, in which the scandal of Naples asserted that he was encouraged by more than the connivance of his accommodating queen. Her own conduct had so completely become the scandal of Europe, that the malignant and profligate court of France, before the revolution, upbraided Marie Antoinette with the irregularities of her sister's life.⁸ The murmurs of her court did not hesitate to impute to her still darker crimes. In the later years of her life the ill-health of her eldest son was attributed to an attempt on the part of his unnatural mother to remove him by poison. It is condemnation enough of her character to say that such a story could find general belief. Unhappily the memory of the queen has sufficient to answer for without burdening it with the additional weight of an unproved accusation of so fearful a crime. In judging even of those offences of which the concurrent testimony of too many witnesses forbids us to entertain a doubt, we must remember the position in which she was placed. There are those who lay upon her all the guilt of the cruel atrocities that disgraced her husband's reign. The Neapolitan people attempted, and attempt to this day, to palliate the conduct of their good-natured monarch by imputing these acts exclusively to his wife. But impartial justice will at least suggest the question, what might she have been if the selfish policy of her mother had not destined

⁸ "Edinburgh Review," vol. x. p. 159.

her for such a husband. And those who have drawn the contrast between the Queen of Naples in the early days of her married life, and the queen of a later day, have, at the same time, given us ground for the charity of believing that, under happier circumstances, Caroline of Naples might have left a very different narrative for history to record, and, although nothing could justify her conduct, there are others who must share the responsibility of her fall.⁹

The outbreak of the French revolution produced a complete change in the character of the queen. At least it brought permanently forward the instincts of cruelty and suspicion which, under a gay exterior, had lurked in that character unperceived. The ill-

⁹ A manuscript is deposited in the British Museum, containing a diary written during a residence in Sicily in the years 1811 and 1812. Lord Valentia is the writer of this diary, which contains some curious and authentic information. He thus describes at that period the character and conduct of the queen:—

“The strange accounts that I have received of the queen, have been more than confirmed to me by Lord and Lady Amherst, and the present critical state to which Sicily is reduced may be entirely attributed to her folly and violence of temper; her vices are by far less detrimental. The king in the government of his country is a perfect cypher, while the queen receives the reports of the ministers, and is as despotic in her little way as the imperial Catharine was over the vast empire of Russia. The misfortunes which had reduced the Court of Naples to the utmost distress most certainly originated in the folly and extravagance of the government . . . Such was the fate of Maria Carolina, the daughter of the illustrious Maria Teresa. When honoured and respected as *La belle Reine de Naples*, she probably would have recoiled at the picture of a withered hag of sixty indulging in promiscuous debauchery, drunk with opium, and stained with the blood of her subjects. She probably then limited her vices to the indulgence of her personal passions. . . . Irritated by repeated misfortunes, the natural violence of the queen's temper has been increased by the use of opium, of which she now takes six grains in the course of the day, and the scenes to which it leads are sometimes dreadful.”—*Lord Valentia's Private Journal of the affairs of Sicily, 1811, and 1812. Addl. MSS., Brit. Mus., 19, 426. Pp. 29, 31, 36.*

fated Marie Antoinette was her sister, and the cruelties the Queen of France had endured rankled deep in the heart of Caroline. Whatever were her faults the Queen of Naples could not be charged with want of family affection—it mingled with her pride—it was a part of her education. The stern lessons of her mother had impressed upon her early youth attachment to her illustrious relatives as a part of the religion of her imperial race. The crimes of the Parisians had made her regard the people in every country as the natural enemies of sovereigns ; and she fancied she avenged her sister's death by the cruelties she inflicted on those who held the democratic principles of the French.

The alliance of Naples and Austria had just been strengthened by the marriage of the two daughters of Ferdinand and Caroline, the eldest with Francis, the heir of the house of Hapsburgh, the other to his next brother, Ferdinand, for whom the grand-duchy of Tuscany was reserved. These marriages were celebrated at Vienna in 1790. The King and Queen of Naples visited, on the occasion, the court of their imperial relatives ; and, in that court, the first intelligence reached them of the events which even then began to threaten royal authority in France.

On their way home from Vienna, they met at the pontifical court the princesses, the aunts of Louis XVI., who had fled from Paris. The exaggerated narrative of these ladies was not calculated to allay the passions which the bare notion of a revolt against kingly government was sufficient to excite ; and between the policy

of Vienna, and the tales of terror of Rome, both Caroline and her husband returned to Naples in an excitement of agitation and alarm.

A crusade against learning was not, it may be supposed, very disagreeable to the king. Books and philosophy were believed at Naples, as they were elsewhere, to be the enemies of religion and order, and to have created the revolution of France. The strictest watch was put upon the circulation of all printed books ; all men of letters were suspected ; their meetings were prohibited, and the movements of each of them entrusted to the observation of spies. In her terror of the supposed spread of revolutionary principles, the queen encouraged the services of this class, and she even condescended to meet her secret informers in a room in the palace which was appropriated for this purpose, and which was known as "the dark parlour." The government that once condescends to adopt the employment of spies as a system for the suppression of conspiracies will not long be left without plots. Soon after the return of the court a number of persons were imprisoned in the Neapolitan dungeons sufficient to fill the city with terror and alarm.¹⁰

The execution of the King of France, still more that of the queen, completed the exasperation of the Neapolitan court. The Neapolitan court refused to receive Makau the French ambassador, and exerted all their influence to engage the Ottoman Porte in a coalition against France. A wise and manly note was addressed to the King of Sardinia and the republic of Venice,

¹⁰ Colletta.

proposing an Italian confederation to resist any invasion of Italy by France. "If," said this document, "the Sicilies, Sardinia, and Venice were to form a league for mutual defence, the most high Pontiff would concur in the holy enterprise; and lesser potentates, whose States are intermediate, voluntarily or on compulsion, will follow the move. This note is intended to prepare, and form a confederation, in which the king of the Two Sicilies, the least exposed to danger, offers himself first in the struggle, and reminds every Italian prince that the hope of escaping singly has ever been the ruin of Italy."¹¹

The Sardinian king acceded to the proposal. Venice, with that pusillanimity which was her ruin, refused her assent. A short interval was sufficient to prove that the King of the Sicilies was not the last to be exposed to danger, and certainly not the first in the struggle when it began.


Hardly had this high-spirited note been issued, when Admiral La Touche led a French fleet, of fourteen sail of the line, into the Bay of Naples; casting anchor close to the town, he demanded the reception of the French ambassador, and a pledge of the neutrality of Naples.

The force in readiness was amply sufficient to meet the threatened attack. The council of the king all advised resistance; the queen suffered for the credulity with which she had listened to the inventions of spies. She declared that she had received information that the kingdom was full of Jacobins; at this awful announcement, the terrified king and council gave way. The

¹¹ Colletta's History of Naples, book iii. chap. i.

French minister was received ; an envoy sent to Paris ; and finally a pledge given of the neutrality of Naples in any war in which France should be engaged ; and thus ended the Italian confederation, of which Naples was to be the head.

After the terms of peace had been arranged, the French fleet remained for some time in the bay to repair the damages of a storm. The French were now the allies of the Neapolitans, and several of the citizens were in the habit of freely visiting the ships. In their intercourse with the officers, some young enthusiasts of the upper class caught the contagion of the democratic principles of France. They were imprudent enough to make a display of their sympathy ; and a few foolish young men, at a supper, displayed a small emblem of the republican cap of liberty suspended at their breast. These occurrences were magnified into high treason. The queen's terror of the Jacobins became intense. Conspiracies were said to exist. A judicial junta was appointed, to try by the form of a court-martial those accused of disaffection. Scarcely had the French fleet weighed anchor, when numerous arrests filled Naples with terror. The prisoners were carried from their houses in the night to the dungeons of St. Elmo, where their imprisonment was so secret, that their friends believed them to have been destroyed. Some cruel executions followed of youths just entering on man's estate. Numbers were sent to the dungeons for life. No conspiracy against the government was either proved or known to exist ; but communication with the French officers, or even the expression of



sympathy with the French revolution, was punished with the penalties of high treason.

This reign of terror lasted from 1792 to 1798. A wretch of the name of Vanni had been appointed as inquisitor to conduct the proceedings, and he played upon the terrors of the queen by representations that the population were almost all disaffected. He reported at one time that he had proofs to convict 20,000 persons, and circumstances of suspicion that implicated 50,000 more. Nothing was too extravagant to be believed. Acton, emboldened by the credulity with which every accusation was received, brought forward a charge which implicated in the guilt of a treasonable conspiracy the Chevalier Medicis, a late minister of the crown, and some of the first nobility of the kingdom. Upon this accusation twenty-eight persons, including Medicis, were flung into the dungeons, where for four years they were detained without a trial.

At last, after four years' imprisonment of the accused, the king, moved by the entreaties of several of their female relatives, peremptorily commanded the junta to decide upon their guilt or innocence. The evidence collected wholly failed in establishing any crime, but Vanni insisted that a case of suspicion had been made out, and pressed on the tribunal that Medicis should be put to the torture in order to extort a confession that might make it proof. The other judges indignantly refused: Medicis and his associates were declared innocent. When they emerged from their dungeons, with their innocence established, but with the traces of four years miserable imprisonment upon their frames; still more,

when they recounted the sufferings they had endured, the popular indignation became so strong, that Vanni was made the scapegoat of the court. He was dismissed from his employment, and banished from the city in disgrace. The queen was compelled to see her favourite Acton go through the form of a nominal retirement from office.

While thus persecuting her own subjects, the queen—for Caroline was the real government of Naples—was pursuing towards the French that course of duplicity which ultimately deprived her of the kingdom. The convention made with the French admiral in 1792 was very soon followed by a league between Naples and the enemies of the republic. This was succeeded by a formal treaty of alliance with France in 1796. While this treaty was in full force, Nelson, in 1798, on his way to Egypt, obtained shelter and provisions in the harbour of Palermo, and on the 15th of May, 1798, the court of Naples concluded a secret treaty with England, Austria, Russia, and the Porte, by which the King of Naples entered into a confederation against France.

Sir William Hamilton was at this time the British ambassador at Naples. The name of his wife is much more associated with the history of this period than his own. Refused on her first arrival admission to the Neapolitan court, this lady contrived, by an artifice, to obtain an interview with the queen.¹² The interview led to an intimacy, in which Lady Hamilton acquired a complete ascendancy over her royal friend. This

¹² Attracting the attention of the king, she contrived to inveigle him into writing to her. Having thus gained her object, the designing beauty carried the letter to the queen. It was by this contrivance that she first obtained admission to her presence.

ascendancy is said to have materially influenced the policy of the Neapolitan court, and years afterwards, when, left in destitution, the once proud beauty was reduced to the humiliation of asking in vain from the British government her right to a pecuniary reward for the services which, when the wife of the British ambassador, she had rendered—repeated applications pressed her claim upon the ground that it was by her personal influence with the Queen of Naples that the fleet of Nelson obtained at Palermo those supplies of provisions which enabled him to proceed to Aboukir without the necessity of returning to Gibraltar.¹³

The first public demonstration of hostility occurred when Lord Nelson returned from the victory of Aboukir. The British fleet anchored in the bay. The admiral was received with the most signal honours. The king presented him with a costly sword. The court accompanied him to the theatre in state. The complaints of the French minister of these proceedings were answered by the extraordinary statement that Nelson had threatened to bombard the town if anchorage were refused to his fleet. In a very short time all disguise was thrown aside, and Naples openly proclaimed her adhesion to the coalition against France.

Immediately afterwards, a proclamation appeared from the king, in which he announced his intention of leading an army into the Roman States, to restore their lawful sovereign to the Roman people, the head of the Church to his see, and to free the Two Sicilies. The same manifesto called on the Roman people to take

¹³ Letters in the *Memoirs of the Right Honourable George Rose*.

part with those who were advancing, not to make war upon Rome, but to restore the authority of their sovereign and the Pope.

At the same time a letter was dispatched to the ministers of the King of Sardinia, urging upon them to excite a movement among their people which might free the king from the alliance which had been forced upon him by the French. "We are aware," said this letter, "that in the cabinet of the king your master, there are many prudent, not to say timid, ministers, who shrink with horror from the words perjury and assassination, as if the recent treaty between France and Sardinia were entitled to respect. Was it not dictated by the superior force of the conqueror? Was it not accepted only because you were obliged to yield to necessity? . . ." "How can you, with your king a prisoner in his own capital, surrounded by hostile bayonets, call it perjury to break promises that were wrung from you by necessity, and disapproved of by your consciences? Is it assassination to exterminate your tyrants?" . . . "The French battalions, careless and secure, are scattered throughout Piedmont. Rouse the patriotism of the people to enthusiasm and fury; let every Piedmontese aspire to the honour of trampling down an enemy of his country. These partial massacres will be of more advantage to Piedmont than successful battles. Nor will the justice of posterity stigmatise with the hideous name of treachery the energetic deed of a whole people who march over the corpses of their oppressors to liberty."¹⁴

¹⁴ Colletta's *History of Naples*, Book iii. Chap. iii.



support in his knowledge that the danger of assassination existed only in the terrified imagination of the king.¹⁵

Hardly had the king returned to Naples, when his army were obliged in a precipitate retreat to abandon Rome to the French, and Championnet, the general of the republican armies, advanced rapidly to the Neapolitan frontier.

After the lapse of more than one hundred years, the Neapolitan people once more saw an invading army occupy their soil. The resistance which they offered to that army is an incident in their history which must not be forgotten in any reflections to which other portions of it give rise. The Neapolitans have been stigmatised as deficient in courage, and many events in their annals of this century give ground for the imputation. But we must always remember that upon the first occasion upon which the French armies approached their homes, they rose as one man at the summons of their king, and few instances of heroic patriotism among the many occasioned by the revolutionary war exceed the devotion and the bravery of the Italian peasants who met in the defiles of the Abruzzi the first onslaught of the French.¹⁶

A proclamation of the king apprised the people of the invasion, and called on them to take up arms in defence of the Church of God, their sovereign, their altars, and their homes. To give greater effect to the

¹⁵ Colletta, book iii. chap. iii.

¹⁶ The bravery of this resistance has been fully acknowledged by the French. Thiers' *Histoire de la Revolution Francaise*, x. p. 200. Jomini's *Guerres de la Revolution*, ix. 67—70. See Botta, ii. 157. Colletta, book iii. chap. iii.

manifesto, it was dated from Rome on the 8th of December, although really issued after the king's return to his own territory. It came to the people as the appeal of their sovereign made to them from the sacred seat of religion, of which he was the defender.

The whole population rose to arms. The advance of the French armies was stopped by the wild bravery of undisciplined masses that disputed the passage of every defile. An army seemed to the French to have sprung from the earth, without generals, without discipline, without a king. Those very people who, in ranks, commanded by their officers, had fled like sheep almost before the commencement of the encounter, performed prodigies of valour in their own hastily raised companies of volunteers. They retook fortresses from the French. They broke down the bridges on the line of the streams, and seized the guns of the invaders whenever they had already crossed. If their bravery was stained by the cruelty with which they massacred the stragglers and the wounded of the invading army, it must be remembered that a war of extermination is almost the natural defence of men fighting for their homes. The only successes achieved by the French were against positions held by the regular troops, which were abandoned by the treachery or the cowardice of their leaders.

It was while this heroic enthusiasm, excited by his own proclamation, was thus defending his fortunes, that the king adopted the resolution of flying from his capital and taking refuge in Sicily. A courier of the king had been murdered by the populace, who mistook him for a

spy of the French, and as they dragged him in triumph before the palace to show their sovereign how they dealt with his enemies, the king was shocked at witnessing the dying agonies of a faithful servant of his own. The terrors of the king saw in this accident a new Jacobin plot. Counsell'd by the ministers, who had been the agents of the queen's tyrannies, he collected every moveable of value appertaining to the crown. The jewels, the antiquities of the royal museum, the ornaments of the palace, were all secretly packed up. The banks and the treasury were rifled of their coin. In all, the value of about twenty millions of ducats, formed the booty of the departing king.¹⁷ A subterraneous passage led from an apartment of the palace to the sea side, and through this passage Lady Hamilton managed at night the conveyance of these treasures; by dexterous artifices she contrived to elude the observation even of the sentries and succeeded in placing them on board a vessel of the British squadron.¹⁸ They were followed on the 21st of December by the king and royal family, to the surprise and indignation of all who were not in the secret. A proclamation appeared upon the walls, in which the king announced his departure to Sicily, but stated his determination to return in a short time at the head of a mighty army, which he assured his subjects it was the only object of his visit to Sicily to raise. This pretence of course imposed upon no one.

Lord Nelson conveyed the royal family in his own ship. Contrary winds detained the vessel for three days.

¹⁷ Colletta.

¹⁸ Memoir of Lady Hamilton.

The people with indignation saw the royal flag of their fugitive monarch floating on the mast of the ship in which he was about to make his escape from the country which every obligation of royalty and manhood called on him to defend. The Archbishop of Naples went on board with an address of his subjects, imploring of the sovereign to return, and pledging themselves to die in his defence. The venerable prelate did not believe it inconsistent with his sacred character to urge on the craven monarch the duty of returning, and placing himself at the head of a nation determined to die in defence of their altars and their homes. Nothing could move the obstinacy of the king, and on the eve of Christmas, he left the Bay of Naples attended by the fleet.

On the festival of Christmas, the day upon which the king had invited the Pontiff to celebrate mass in St. Peter's, Ferdinand was a fugitive from his throne, tossed on the billows of the sea by a violent tempest. The urgency of his departure from Naples had been too great to permit the delay which the indications of an approaching storm would have made prudent. On the passage the squadron encountered a violent gale, which at one time exposed the vessel of Lord Nelson to considerable danger, but on the 26th the royal family reached Palermo in safety, with the exception of an infant who died on the passage in Lady Hamilton's arms. Perceiving the distress of the British admiral's ship, Carraccioli, the Neapolitan commander, kept company with her throughout the storm. At considerable risk to himself he remained near enough to aid

if any accident occurred, and to give her the benefit of his own experience as they approached the dangerous navigation of the Sicilian coast.

Even after the ignominious flight of their sovereign his deserted subjects maintained their resistance to the invaders. Pignatelli, the regent whom the king had left in command, was suspected of intending a surrender to the French, and the municipal authorities of Naples denying the right of the king to appoint a regent, insisted that in his absence the supreme authority devolved upon themselves. The regent was firm in maintaining his authority, although there is little doubt that legal right was against it. He set fire to several gun-boats, which had been drawn up for shelter at Pausilippo, and when the fleet returned from Sicily, two Neapolitan sail of the line and three frigates were burned in the bay.

Proceedings like these prevented any organised opposition to the march of the invading army, which even then a determined opposition might have repelled. Various projects were started by those who regarded the monarchy as left vacant by the flight of the king. They were abandoned as soon as they were proposed, and the regent left to consummate the disgrace of the Neapolitan cause.

On the 12th of January he concluded a truce with the French, by which he surrendered to their general the fortresses that commanded the town. The rabble of Naples rose in indignation. The prisons were opened to swell the armies of the patriots by their inmates. The regent followed the example of his

master, and flying to Sicily abandoned Naples to its fate. A new government was formed, and the populace deserted by all their leaders, elected generals of their own. Even against the undisciplined bands of the Lazzaroni, the French achieved a bloody and a hard-fought triumph, and when on the 23rd their army entered Naples, three thousand corpses of its defenders were lying in the streets. The loss of the assailants was severe.¹⁹

The next day witnessed one of those extraordinary scenes which could not occur perhaps in any other country upon earth. St. Januarius, the patron saint of Naples, and of the Lazzaroni, was the object on the part of the rabble of a superstitious worship, which more resembled the devotions paid by savages to their idols, than the reverence of Christians for the memory of a saint. The miracle of the liquefaction of his blood is well known. Of the impressions entertained of the power of the saint we may form some idea from the fact that the intercession of the Saviour with St. Januarius was frequently implored.

With this important personage the French general determined to make his peace. On the morning after his entry he sent to request permission to place a guard of honour upon the shrine of the saint, and at the same time he intimated to its guardians, that he would anxiously expect to be honoured by witnessing the miracle of the liquefaction of the blood.²⁰ The news

¹⁹ The French testimonies to the bravery of this resistance will be found in the note at the end of this volume.

²⁰ It is said that the messenger politely informed them that the general

spread through the streets. The French, whom they had expected to see as infidels, were actually worshippers of the saint. The French guard of honour as they moved towards the shrine, repeated the phrase they had been taught in Italian, intelligible enough to the rabble, "All honour to St. Januarius!" The effect was electric. The very men who had been fighting against them yesterday now clasped their hands. But when the French general appeared with a costly present before the shrine, when the blood in the phial slowly but manifestly liquefied before the people, their wonder and amazement knew no bounds. It was the visible token of the reconciliation of the saint with the new order of things; "St. Januarius is turned republican," was the announcement that passed from mouth to mouth. The Lazzaroni were content to follow the example of their saint.²¹

On the following day the Parthenopean republic was proclaimed, and a new government entered on its duties amid rejoicings and festivities which made men wonder where the royalists who had fought so desperately for the cause of their sovereign had been found.

was determined to see blood, but that on their conduct it depended whether it should be the blood of St. Januarius or their own.

²¹ Colletta. After the return of the Bourbons a meeting was held of the Lazzaroni, at which, for this act of political tergiversation, St. Januarius was deposed from his office of patron saint, and another elected in his stead. A very short time, however, sufficed to restore their ancient patron to his former authority and respect.

CHAPTER VIII.

Fall of the Parthenopean republic—Surrender of Naples to Cardinal Ruffo—Disavowal of its terms by the king—Arrival of Nelson's fleet at Naples—Cruelties inflicted on the people—Execution of Carraccioli—Arrival of the king—Issue of new ordinances—New and special tribunals—Military courts—Sanguinary executions—New treaty with France—Appeal of Queen Caroline to the Emperor Paul—Peace of Amiens—Return of the king and queen to Naples—Second treaty with France—Its violation—Landing of English and Russian troops at Naples—Co-operation of the Neapolitan government—March of Joseph Buonaparte on Naples—Retirement of the Russian troops—Withdrawal of the English to Sicily—Second flight of the royal family—Joseph Buonaparte proclaimed king of Naples—He is succeeded by Murat.

THE existence of the Parthenopean republic was not of long duration ; established in the end of January it fell in the latter days of July. Championnet had scarcely completed the organisation of its institutions, when he was recalled to Rome by the Directory to take his trial for disobedience in not permitting their emissary to execute a decree which confiscated a large amount of Neapolitan property. He was succeeded by General Macdonald, who could only maintain the authority of the new republic by continuing the French occupation of its territories. The conduct of the French Directory in the transactions which gave occasion to Championnet's recall, did not tend to conciliate the affection of the

people to the new government. Even in the city of Naples the royalists constituted a powerful party. In the country districts, especially in Calabria, they were by far the majority of the people.

It might perhaps have been fairly considered that but little allegiance was due to the monarch who had abdicated all the duties of a king. Never was there a case which admitted of a fairer application of the uncontradicted maxim that to the government *de facto* any citizen may yield obedience without wrong.¹ Many no doubt acted on this principle when they accepted office in the administration of the government to which Ferdinand had abandoned Naples. But the spirit of loyalty among the people and their traditional hatred of French invasion was so strong, that throughout the districts of Calabria, and even in Naples, the cause of the fugitive monarch commanded from multitudes an unreasoning attachment which not even his own humiliating conduct had been able to destroy.

Scarcely had the new government been established at Naples when Cardinal Ruffo, landing with a few royalist troops in Calabria, was able to gather round his standard a motley array of brigands and peasants—a force upon which he conferred the somewhat incongruous title of the Army of the Holy Faith. For some months he maintained his position against all the efforts of the French, and in the guerilla warfare in which the contest was carried on, the conduct of

¹ All jurists agree in this principle, that obedience to the orders or adherence to the cause of a *de facto* government can never be visited with the penalties of treason. This principle was flagrantly violated in the cruelties which followed the restoration of the Bourbons.

both sides was distinguished by feats of bravery and disgraced by acts of cruelty. In the month of May the reverses of the French in Northern Italy, obliged their army, which occupied Naples, to withdraw, and on the 7th of that month, General Macdonald led its main body from the Neapolitan dominions, leaving only small garrisons of French still to occupy in the name of the Parthenopean Republic some few of the forts.

Left to themselves, the feeble directory of that republic can scarcely be said to have offered opposition to the triumphant progress of the Cardinal's arms. Large reinforcements of English, of Sicilians, of Russians, and of Turks, had swelled the army of the royalists to 40,000 men. The garrison at Castelmare surrendered on condition of being allowed to depart for France. In the beginning of June all the Neapolitan kingdom, except the capital and the district immediately around it, had returned to their obedience to the king.

As the army of Ruffo approached it, Naples, without waiting to be conquered, submitted to the royal authority. The royalists resumed the ascendancy in the town—the adherents of the republic were obliged in most parts of the city to hide themselves as rebels; and when the Cardinal encamped before it, he found the greater portion of the city already under royalist control.

In some of its quarters the republicans still maintained a retreat. Barricades were drawn across many of the streets, and behind them the adherents of the republic were ready for a desperate resistance. The castles of Uovo and Nuovo, to the first of which the Directory retired, were in possession of garrisons

composed partly of French and partly of Parthenopean troops. Their guns bore directly on the city, and the entry of the royalist army would have been the signal for an encounter which would have made Naples a scene of carnage, not improbably left it a heap of ruins. St. Elmo was still in the hands of a French general. The ships of war of the republic, under the command of Caraccioli, were able to oppose, or at least harass the small flotilla of the English naval force which was assailing the town ; and in addition to all this, the French fleet from Toulon was hourly expected to arrive to its relief.

It was under these circumstances that Cardinal Ruffo took the step of conceding to the Neapolitan rebels a capitulation. On the night of the 13th of June an illumination of the city by the royalists was interrupted by a sortie from the castles and a cannonade. The rejoicings were disturbed by the slaughter of many who were sharing in them. Terrified by the prospect of Naples reduced to ruins, Ruffo granted an armistice, and after considerable delay the terms of a capitulation were finally agreed on.

The republican garrisons in the castles were to leave them with the honours of war, they were to be permitted either to embark for Toulon, or to remain unmolested in their own country as they pleased—and the indemnity thus conceded to them was to be extended to all the prisoners which had been taken by the royalist army during the war.

This capitulation was concluded on the 20th. The formal signature was delayed until the 22nd, when it

was finally signed, not only by Cardinal Ruffo, as viceroy of Ferdinand in the kingdom of Naples, but by Captain Foote, commanding the British naval forces in the bay, and also by the commanders of the Russian and the Turkish troops.

The whole city of Naples yielded itself peacefully to the royalist authorities, and the viceroy issued a proclamation in which he praised the paternal clemency of the king, announced a universal amnesty, and declared that the past being forgotten, all true Neapolitans had now no other political care than the anxiety how best they could promote the honour of their country and their king.

The garrisons of the castles retained possession of them until the vessels could be procured to convey those who wished it to Toulon. Polaccas were obtained with some difficulty, and were moored under the forts in the course of the 23rd. It is confidently said, and there seems no reason to doubt the assertion, that nothing but the prevalence of an unfavourable breeze prevented the embarkation and their sailing on that day.

On the morning of the 24th, the inhabitants of Naples saw the blue expanse of the water studded in the distance with the white sails of a squadron of war. At first it was supposed to be the French and Spanish fleet, and curses were hurled by the republicans upon those who advised the capitulation when succour was just at hand. It proved to be the fleet of Lord Nelson; and, before evening, the ill-fated city understood the mission on which it came.²

² As to all the transactions connected with the violation of the terms of the capitulation, see the note at the end of this volume.

Early in June, Lord Nelson, at the request of Ferdinand, left Naples with his fleet to aid in the reduction of Naples. Intelligence of the movements of the French fleet induced him to return to Palermo, and he cruised off the coast of Sicily until the 21st. On that day the "Foudroyant" was again off Palermo on its way to Naples. Sir William and Lady Hamilton came on board. The queen had already heard of the negotiations with the rebels, and Lady Hamilton was earnestly implored to use her influence with the British admiral to prevent any capitulation being carried into effect. A decree was drawn up and signed by Ferdinand, denouncing death to the rebels. "Kings do not treat with their rebel subjects," was the haughty language of this ordinance. A letter from Caroline was conveyed to Lord Nelson, earnestly imploring of him to save the honour of the crown of Naples—to protect the dignity of all sovereigns, by disavowing the doctrine that there could be a treaty between traitors and their king.

It is said that further communications overtook Lord Nelson before he entered the Bay of Naples, informing him more particularly of the completion of the negotiation. But when he entered the Bay of Naples he was under the impression that only an armistice had been entered into, but that no formal capitulation had been signed. From the distance he saw the flag of truce flying both from the castles and the "Seahorse," the ship of Captain Foote, and he immediately made the signal to annul the armistice. His vessel did not cast anchor in the roadstead until four in the afternoon

of that day. In the course of the forenoon the Russian commander made some of the Neapolitans embark in the vessels provided for their conveyance to Toulon.

When Nelson was visited by Captain Foote and informed of the terms of the capitulation, he adopted the opinion that they required the royal concurrence—that they were put an end to by the appearance of his own fleet before anything had been done to carry them into effect; he issued on the 25th a manifesto to the republicans who still occupied the forts that they must submit unconditionally to their king. It would seem that an excited and angry negotiation followed between the British admiral and the Turkish and Russian commanders; who, with Cardinal Ruffo, insisted on carrying the conditions into effect. Lord Nelson at last agreed to forbear using any force to prevent the embarkation of the garrisons as agreed on; but, without retracting the manifesto which was already published. A few days afterwards he published an ordinance of Ferdinand, by which all the adherents of the so-called republic were declared guilty of treason—all were to be tried by a junta of state, who were to punish the principal offenders with death—those of lesser guilt with imprisonment or exile, all with confiscation.

On the 25th Cardinal Ruffo indignantly and vehemently protested against the violation of the terms he had granted. He came on board Lord Nelson's ship, and long and earnestly argued with him. Sir William Hamilton acted as interpreter in the interview, and Lord Nelson was at last obliged to employ the eloquence

of Lady Hamilton to reply to the remonstrances of the cardinal. The latter urged his part with manliness and determination. He went the length of saying that if Lord Nelson cancelled the capitulation he would not direct the troops under his command to fire on the forts which were still in possession of the French.

The dispute between Lord Nelson and the cardinal proceeded so far, that it was deemed necessary to remove the latter from Naples. An autograph letter of the king commanded his immediate attendance at Palermo, and not very covertly reproached him with his slowness in yielding to the "evangelical" arguments of Lord Nelson. At the same time orders were transmitted both to Lord Nelson and the Neapolitan general of Ferdinand, which plainly implied that, if necessary, the removal of the cardinal was to be accomplished by force.³

On the 28th of June Cardinal Ruffo was conveyed to Sicily, and on the same evening the "Seahorse," the frigate which Captain Foote commanded, was despatched on the special service of attending King Ferdinand at Palermo. Armed boats visited the vessels in which the republicans who had come out of the castles had been placed. These vessels had previously been moored under the guns of the British fleet. A few victims selected from the number were brought pinioned in irons, and carried to the dungeons on shore. It was the signal by which the fury of royalist vengeance was let loose. A base and degraded populace

³ See the letters published in Sir George Rose's correspondence in the note at the end of this volume.

became its instruments. Reports were circulated that the Jacobins had formed a plot for murdering thirty thousand of the people, and that snares of an infernal construction were prepared, in which the royalists were to be strangled. Nothing was too absurd for the credulity of the Lazzaroni. Bands of ruffians visited the houses of the citizens, and the presence of a hempen cord was sufficient evidence to condemn the ill-fated master to the tender mercies of the miscreants who pursued pillage and murder without remorse. The recognised agents of the government vied with these unsanctioned, but tolerated executioners, in the retribution they inflicted without any very careful distinction between the innocent and the guilty, if any indeed could be guilty, where the sole crime imputed was adherence to the only lawful government which the king's disgraceful flight had left in Naples. The dungeons of the city and its fortresses were filled with prisoners in a few days ; others were still despatched to the chambers of the Granili and the island of Procida. All these prisons, extensive as they were, were not large enough to contain the victims that were seized. New dungeons were extemporised in vain. At last the captives were flung into the empty public granaries, and left for days without food or change of dress. Men of the highest family and most irreproachable character were thrown into loathsome gaols, from which, after the form of a hurried trial, they were led to a miserable end.

Unhappily the truth of this dismal story rests on testimony too strong, and too faith-worthy to be doubted.

The ludicrous, in some instances, mingled with the tragic. Among the buildings assaulted by the royalist Lazzaroni was a hospital, from which some medical students had recklessly displayed the tricolor. It happened to be an hospital in which lunatics were confined. The mob supposed the madness feigned to escape them. The madmen were dragged with the students to the dungeon, into which they were promiscuously thrust. The howlings of one of these maniacs was miserably stopped. The skull of the frenzied wretch as he attempted to escape was cloven by the sabre of the trooper on sentry at the door.¹⁰

Pre-eminent even amid these horrors the common consent of mankind has placed the fate of the Prince Carracioli, the admiral of the fleet. He had the misfortune to provoke the personal enmity of the queen. He had accompanied the royal family in their flight to Sicily, but when a decree was issued by the republic, confiscating the property of those who did not return to the country, he sought and obtained permission from Ferdinand to revisit Naples. The enmity of the queen was founded on an allegation that he had then given his promise not to serve under the republic. In vain he urged that he had been compelled to return to his position as admiral of the fleet. A court-martial was convened on board the British flag-ship, and one hour after he was brought on board, he was placed on his trial. Conviction speedily followed. The sentence was

¹⁰ See for the account of these transactions the histories of Botta, Colletta, and the memoirs of General Pepe. The latter was among the prisoners seized by the royalists, and was himself an eye-witness of the horrors he describes.

death. He implored that he might be shot, but the sentence was executed by hanging him from the yard-arm of his own ship ; the body, with the weight of heavy shot attached, was flung coffinless and dishonoured into the sea.¹¹

On the 8th of July the king arrived in the bay. The wretched Neapolitans had looked forward to his coming as likely to mitigate the horrors of which their city was the scene. Shut up in gloomy solitude on board an English man-of-war, he refused admission to all visitors from the shore. The decrees which he issued soon taught the people that the royal presence did not temper the severity of the persecution. One decree formally annulled the capitulation ; another abolished the municipal constitution of the city of Naples, and thus destroyed the last remnant of liberty which existed in the kingdom. The judicial junta already named by Cardinal Ruffo was suspected of being too merciful for the intentions of the court. A new and a more unscrupulous one was named by the king. Two edicts were issued for the regulation of the trials of offenders. The first defined the crime of high treason, in terms which

¹¹ History records no incident more striking than the fact of the body of the unhappy admiral rising to the surface, notwithstanding the immense weight attached to it, and floating on the surface of the waves past the window of the cabin from which the king was looking. The manuscript of Lord Valentia varies a little from the generally received account. The king has been represented as asking in terror what does he want, and being answered by one of the bystanders, he comes to demand Christian burial. According to the statement of Lord Valentia, the observation of the king was an unfeeling jest. "Perhaps," said his majesty, "he is coming to beg a free pardon," in allusion probably to petitions of that character which were pressed upon him all day. "No, sire," replied one of his courtiers, "but he is come to ask for Christian burial."

subjected to its penalties every one who had in any way assisted the republican government. Its provisions were declaratory, and therefore retrospective, and many persons were executed for acts which at the time of their commission violated no law. Words of disparagement applied to the king or royal family were liable to be visited with the penalty of death. An expression of contempt for the king's ignominious flight, used in the previous December, would now be sufficient to subject the speaker to a traitor's doom. The form of proceeding appointed by the second decree was worthy of the code. The secret evidence of spies or informers was declared sufficient to convict. No defence was allowed to the accused except through an officer appointed by the court ; he was not to be allowed the privilege of being confronted with the witnesses against him. Torture was authorised either for the purpose of extorting a confession, or compelling evidence ; no appeal was to be permitted from the sentence, and its execution must take place on the day on which it was pronounced.

This sanguinary form of procedure was not sufficient to satisfy the impatient vengeance of the king. A military commission was at the same time authorised, to which the king might delegate the trial of cases in the city or the provinces. A commission which was to hold its sittings by beat of drum, and try, condemn, and execute, "*ad horas et modum belli*."

The judges prepared to execute their commission in the spirit of this code ; the king handed over to them a list of proscribed persons sent from Palermo by the

queen. Their mission was avowedly one of extermination of all who held political opinions opposed to those of the court. The decree that appointed them declared the royal determination "to purge the country of the enemies of the altar and the throne." Such were the ordinances which were issued from the cabin of a British ship, and beneath the shelter of the British flag.

It would far exceed the limits of these pages to describe the horrors of the tribunals—the executions that followed, or the terrible miseries of the dungeons to which royal clemency consigned those whose lives were spared. We read of dungeons or caverns, in the island of Farenano, excavated in the deep recesses of the rock, where no rays of the sun ever penetrate, and a gloomy twilight only makes visible the damp vapours that float, and the noxious animals that crawl in its gloomy recesses. Into this living sepulchre were flung nine of the reprieved prisoners: three of them were the aged Prince of Torella, the Marquis Corletto, and the advocate Poerio.¹² The mind becomes wearied with the sameness of these records of cruelty and crime—the story of a government which reduced its annals to be little more than the catalogue of human beings doomed to perish on the scaffold, or to meet a far worse fate in those dungeons, all whose horrors will be known only when the deeds of cruelty that have been done in secret shall be made manifest before angels and men.

The merciless tribunals of this political inquisition were not slow in executing their bloody task. There were

¹² Colletta, book v. chap. i.

more than thirty thousand prisoners to be tried. One of the juntas held its sittings in the night. There is nothing to relieve the horror of the scene except the dignity and heroism displayed by the condemned. Hopeless of life, they met the brutal insults of their judges by words of haughty and solemn defiance, boldly uttered by men who knew they were about to die. The executions purged Naples, not of the enemies of the altar and the throne, but of those whose genius added lustre to its professions and its literature, and whose virtues threw a charm over the circles of domestic life. From the list of the sufferers it were easy to frame a long and honoured catalogue of names, distinguished in scholarship, in science and in art.¹³

Neither rank, nor age, nor sex, could find mercy. The grey hairs of men of seventy years were dabbled with their blood. Boys of sixteen or seventeen fell by the hand of the executioner. The priestly, even the episcopal character, was not suffered to shield the ministers and the prelates of religion from the ven-

¹³ There is something peculiarly melancholy in finding in the ordinary sources of intelligence such announcements as these :—

“August, 1799. Deaths by the hands of the public executioner, soon after the return of his Neapolitan majesty to Naples. Francisco Bagni, professor of physic; Paschale Baffa, Joseph Logoteta, Francisco Conforti, all three distinguished literati. Domenico Cirilli, M.D., physician during thirty years to Sir William Hamilton the English ambassador at Naples; Natale, bishop of Pico; Marcello Scoti, ecclesiastic. (The above seven persons were members of the Provisional Government of the Neapolitan Republic.) Eleanor Fonseca, a learned lady; Mario Pagano, one of the most elegant modern Italian writers, and who drew up a form of constitution for the intended republic; Nicol. Pacifico, a distinguished botanist, seventy years old, and captain of the National Guard; Vinc. Troisi, chaplain of the Provisional Government.”—*Gentleman's Magazine for June, 1801, August, 1799. Part I., p. 572.*

geance of the queen. Priests and bishops suffered on the scaffold, the only crime of one of the former, was that of having acted as chaplain to the republic. To crown the catalogue of horrors, many women suffered among the condemned,¹⁴ and ladies of rank and consideration expiated by an ignominious death the crime of having acknowledged in social intercourse the position of the officials of the only government that existed in the land.¹⁵

No formal records have preserved the names or the numbers of the victims of this terrible assize. It has been computed by competent authority that, including the executions in the provinces, more than four thousand

¹⁴ Among the ladies who suffered was Eleanora Fonseca Pimental. "Une dame Neapolitaine qui s'est d'abord distinguée par des poésies agréables et ingénieuses, et qui s'est ensuite livrée à des études arides mais importantes pour le bien public. Elle a composée une livre sur un projet de banque nationale, où il y a des vues très profondes, qui pourroit intéresser les hommes les plus instruits dans ces matières."—*Memoires Secrètes des Cours de l'Italie*, vol. i. p. 77.

¹⁵ Far more than the fate of even her accomplished and high-born companions is that of Luigia Sanfelice calculated to excite indignation and pity. During the days of the republic two rival lovers sought the affections of this young girl. One was a royalist, the other, her favourite suitor, an officer in the French army. Her royalist lover confided to her that a plot had been formed for the massacre of the French. She conveyed the information to his rival, and it led to the detection of the conspiracy.

She was condemned to die as having given assistance to the authorities of the republic. The unhappy girl was about to become a mother, and her execution was respited till she should give birth to her babe. In the meantime she was removed to Palermo and imprisoned in a dungeon. When her child was born her execution was ordered. About the same time the wife of the heir-apparent presented her husband with his first-born son. The etiquette of the Neapolitan court prescribed that, on such an occasion, the princess should be entitled to any favour she asked of the king; when visited by her father-in-law the duchess raised the babe, to whose tiny hand she had fastened a card with her petition inscribed upon it,—“The Life of Luigia Sanfelice.” The king, when he read it, flung the infant down, and rushed in a passion from the room. Luigia Sanfelice was sent back to Naples and executed.

persons of all ranks and ages, and of both sexes, suffered death under the sentences of these tribunals.¹⁶ The fierce passions of the Lazzaroni were permitted to supplement, they could scarcely surpass, the atrocities of the courts ; and in a city occupied by thousands of troops, and on an open place commanded by the guns of a powerful fleet, these wretches assembled in front of the royal palace and actually roasted living men in the flames. Rivalling the demoniac atrocities of the revolution in Paris, they are said to have torn the flesh of their victims with their teeth.¹⁷

Before proceeding to this energetic demonstration of loyalty, they had been permitted to gratify their feelings by dragging prisoners of every age, and of both sexes, through the streets, taunting them with savage insults, and occasionally saving them from the mockery of a trial by dispatching them with their knives.

The cruelties of the tribunals did not end with the executions. To minor sentences of exile, of imprisonment, or of confiscation, more than 20,000 persons are said to have been condemned.¹⁸ All evil passions gathered round the sittings of the tribunal on its circuits through the land. Rapacity and revenge prompted denunciations of the creditor, the criminal, or the friend. Servants betrayed their masters—members of the same

¹⁶ Spalding's Italy, vol. iii. p. 51.

¹⁷ "It has been said not only that the miserable victims of the rage and cruelties of the fanatics were savagely murdered, but that, in many instances, their flesh was eaten and devoured by the cannibals, who are the advocates and the instruments of social order."—*Speech of Mr. Fox, February 3rd, 1800.*

¹⁸ See the note at the end of this volume.

family appeared in some instances to accuse each other. The most frivolous pretexts sufficed for condemnation. Boys of twelve years of age were imprisoned for having been present at some of the ceremonies of the republic; women were condemned for having succoured their wounded relatives. Acts not only innocent, but laudable, became crimes under that comprehensive edict which authorised the judge to find high treason in any act which he could call one of succour or assistance to the republican enemies of the king.

Such was the inauguration of Ferdinand's restored authority after the expulsion of the French. When, after a few days' stay at Naples, he returned to Palermo, he was received by the people with the honours due to the hero of a successful war. The reception, however, was the expression not of loyalty, but of national animosities, the old feud between the islanders and the dwellers on the continent. The victory and even the cruelties of Ferdinand were the triumphs of Sicily over Naples; the king whom the islanders had sheltered, had wreaked their vengeance upon the hereditary enemies of their race.

These atrocities were only ended by the treaty which in 1801 was concluded between Naples and France—a treaty in which, to the honour of Napoleon, he stipulated for a complete amnesty. “The king's subjects, whether banished, forced to fly, shut up in dungeons, or in concealment for their political opinions, to be restored to their country, to their freedom, and to the enjoyment of their property.”¹⁹

¹⁹ Treaty of May 20th, 1801.

This treaty with Naples had been obtained from Napoleon entirely by the influence of the Russian emperor Paul. The address and the energy of Caroline had procured the interference of the Autocrat of the North. Neither Ferdinand nor his queen had any wish to remain in Naples to witness the scenes that followed their restoration. The king, it has been already said, returned to Palermo; Caroline was conveyed in one of Lord Nelson's ships to Leghorn. She waited at Florence the result of the battle of Marengo,²⁰ and upon receiving the intelligence of Napoleon's victory, she accompanied Lord Nelson and Sir William and Lady Hamilton, as far as Trieste, on her way to Vienna.²¹ The peace of Luneville immediately followed, but all her entreaties could not prevail on the Austrian court to insist on the insertion in that treaty of a stipulation to protect the kingdom of Naples.

The queen knew perfectly well that Napoleon meditated a summary revenge for the duplicity with which she had acted. Murat was already leading his army to the south, charged with the execution of that revenge. The whole Italian army of France, free from any other antagonist in the peninsula, was ready to crush Naples

²⁰ She had determined, if victory declared for the Austrian, to return to Naples; if not, to proceed to Vienna. In the early part of the day the Austrians had won the field of Marengo, which the bravery of Kellermann retrieved. When the first accounts were despatched it was believed that the rout of the French was inevitable. Caroline, after receiving them, retired to rest, desiring that any time at which the intelligence of the decisive defeat of the French should arrive she should be awake.

Her order was complied with, but it was only that she might hear the news of the victory which made Napoleon master of Italy.

²¹ See the account of this journey in Lord Nelson's Letters.—*Sir Harris Nicholas—Nelson's Letters and Despatches.*

with an overwhelming force. In this extremity she succeeded in obtaining from a stranger the protection which her own relatives refused. An application to Paul from the queen secured his intercession, and Napoleon contemptuously granted terms of peace to Naples, as he took care to express in the official documents, "in consideration of the esteem which the Russian emperor entertained for its king."

It was not until the peace of Amiens appeared to have restored permanent tranquillity to Europe, that Ferdinand and Caroline ventured to resume their residence in Naples. They did so in the midst of depression and gloom. The spirit of the nation had not yet risen from the effect of the scenes that had followed the last appearance of their sovereign among them.

The danger she had escaped had not taught wisdom to the queen, nor the generosity of France mitigated the hatred which she bore to everything connected with its name. She entered into plots against the emperor which were betrayed. Her letters to Napoleon, full of friendship and esteem, reached him at the same time with intercepted communications, in which she was intriguing with other powers against him.

A secret convention with Russia did not probably come to the knowledge of the emperor, but so far was he provoked, that at a levee at Milan he burst before the diplomatic circle into an ungovernable rage; he upbraided the Neapolitan representative with the treachery of his court, and the amazed assembly heard threats and menaces addressed to the minister who

stood there only because he was the representative of a friendly power.

Napoleon demanded at one time that Caroline should retire from Naples to the Austrian dominions. Subsequently however he was satisfied with extorting from Naples a new and more solemn treaty, in which Ferdinand once more bound himself to neutrality in the war. This was ratified at Naples on the 21st of September, 1805, and on the ratification the French troops evacuated the portion of the Neapolitan territory which they had for some time occupied.

The very same day that the ratification was given to the French minister, the Russian envoy received from the queen a written assurance that this treaty should in no respect interfere with the previous engagement with Russia, having been signed merely to evade the threats of France. This memorandum was forwarded to the Russian general at Malta, with a request that he would still carry out his plans of landing at Naples with an allied force.²²

England had despatched to the Mediterranean an expedition under the command of Sir James Craig. The British general has left on record the feelings with which he received from the Russian commander the communication of the perfidy of the Neapolitan court. His duty, he resolved, was to act with the Russian general, who showed no scruple in availing himself of the treachery of the queen.²³ On the 19th of November, an

²² General Sir Henry Bunbury's Narrative of the Great War.

²³ " the step which his Sicilian Majesty has thought it expedient to adopt in signing a treaty of neutrality with France, under a declaration delivered at the same time to the Russian minister, that he

army of 6000 English and 13,000 Russians, landed at Naples, and a combined squadron of the navies of both nations anchored in the bay. The Neapolitan government made every preparation for joining to the allied armament its own military force.

The French ambassador instantly left Naples, indignantly remonstrating against this shameless violation of a treaty which had not been two months signed. Never was the retribution of perfidy more prompt or more deserved. Joseph Buonaparte was marching on Naples a force against which the wisest of the allied generals believed it impossible to defend the frontier. Queen Caroline madly urged the Russian General Lacy to oppose the enemy's approach. All difficulty, however, was at an end, when on the 7th of January that general received the commands of his court at once to embark his army for Corfu. A few days more brought the intelligence of the peace of Presburg, and Caroline discovered that her imperial relative had not thought of her in its stipulations, and that she was abandoned to the tender mercies of the enemy whom she had

considered it extorted by force, and, consequently, in no way obligatory on him; but, on the contrary, that it was his intention to adhere to his prior treaty with Russia."

"I feel a very great repugnance to stand forth either as directing the public operations of my country on this occasion, or even in my individual capacity, as the supporter of what in its outline, and under the circumstances of a total ignorance of its details, I could not but regard as an act of perfidy; and had the transaction stood simply on its own bottom, unaccompanied with any other consideration than the consequences to the government with which it originated, I should not have hesitated to decline giving my support or protection to it."

" . . . A strict fulfilment of my engagement with the Russian general appeared to me my first and 'greatest duty.'—*Despatch of Sir James Craig, December 9, 1805.*

now irretrievably exasperated by repeated acts of perfidy and deceit.

Sir James Craig retired into Sicily, determined, if possible, still to preserve that island from the French. On the 22nd of January, the transports that carried the British troops anchored in the harbour of Messina. It was not for more than a month afterwards that they could obtain the permission of the royal authorities to land. The queen had persuaded the British minister at Naples that she could make terms with the French, and Mr. Eliot objected to the occupation by the British general of the Sicilian ports ; he urged the retirement of the army to Malta. Craig adhered to his instructions to defend Sicily. In spite of the prayers and entreaties of the queen, disregarding her protestations that she was engaged in negotiations with Napoleon, Joseph Buonaparte continued his inexorable march upon Naples. The king, as usual, fled from the scene of danger, embarking on board the only line of battle ship that remained. The queen continued at Naples, indulging in the most unmeasured abuse of the English, and vainly attempting by negotiations to stop the triumphant progress of the French arms. On the 9th of February, the French army crossed the frontiers, proclaiming the commands of Napoleon, that the kingdom of Naples should be seized as the just penalty of the perfidy of its court. Two days afterwards, the queen followed her husband in his flight, glad to avail herself of the protection in Sicily of the British arms.

The people of Naples looked with indifference upon the approaching change of dynasty. On the very day

on which the queen left Naples without even the form of a government the courts of law continued to sit. The ordinary business of the city was not suspended. The French columns entered in peaceful array. Proclamations were distributed in the name of Napoleon, declaring that his troops had not come to war upon the people of Naples, but to punish the unexampled perfidy of the court. The efforts of the queen to excite any loyal enthusiasm either in the capital or the rural districts had miserably failed. Had the interregnum lasted longer it is possible that the miscreants, who always watched such occasions as the opportunities of pillage, might have been successful in their attempts to excite disorder and tumult. But, two days after the flight of the queen, the city was in the quiet and unopposed possession of the French.

The seizure of the kingdom was soon followed by the assumption of the crown. On the 3rd of March Joseph issued a decree of Napoleon, by which he was appointed King of Naples. On the same day he was proclaimed, and the authorities of the kingdom took the oath of fidelity to their new liege lord.

After a short reign of two years Joseph was transferred to the more important, but more doubtful throne of Spain, by one of those marvellous movements of Napoleon in which dynasties and thrones were tossed to and fro; and by a decree from Bayonne, dated the 15th of July, 1808, the kingdom of Naples was conferred upon Joachim Murat, the bravest, the most chivalrous, but, at the same time, the most incompetent and rash of the marshals of the empire.

On the 6th of September, in the same year, Murat, in a splendid procession, entered Naples as its king. A few weeks afterwards he was joined by his queen, Caroline, the sister of Napoleon. He still occupied the throne of Naples when the chieftain who bestowed it on him had been compelled to surrender that of France.

CHAPTER IX.



Retreat of the Royal Family of Naples to Sicily—Connexion of Sicily with England—Constitution of Sicily—Its early History—Her first Parliaments—Laws of Frederick II.—Enfranchisement of the Commons—Parliamentary Privileges—Exclusive right of Taxation not confined to Commons—Right of Investiture—Parliamentary Privileges always respected—Charles V.—Treaty of Utrecht—Distinct system of Sicilian Jurisprudence—Parliaments—Their defects—Their achievements—Defects in the Laws—Feudal Tribunals—Captains of Justice—Sicilian Corn Laws—Their effects on Agriculture—Sicily in 1810—Attempt of Ferdinand to destroy the Constitution in 1799—English occupation in 1806.

THE second flight of the royal family of Naples to Palermo was followed by a continued residence in Sicily for nine years. During that period the history and politics of the island were closely connected with those of England. A British army occupied the country; British fleets protected its coasts—and under the guidance and direction of the representative of the British sovereign, changes were effected in its internal policy which gave to the people a freedom, which England has been frequently said to have guaranteed. Her acquiescence in the destruction of that freedom, has been imputed as an act of bad faith, which in the minds of many supplies more solid grounds of imputation than those upon which her conduct to Genoa has been impeached.

With the exception of England, Sicily was the only European nation which preserved to the time of the French revolution, representative institutions. About the same period Norman princes had ascended the English and the Sicilian thrones. In Sicily, as in England, the Normans found before them the laws and institutions of a Teutonic race, far more favourable to personal liberty than the feudalism which they introduced. In both countries the new feudal institutions were blended with the popular system that had previously prevailed. In both, parliaments were the result, assemblies in which the hereditary and the elective principles were combined.

Sicily had been, it will be remembered, conquered by the Normans from the Saracens, about the year 1040. Under the rule, first of the Norman sovereigns and then of the house of Hohenstauffen, it had been united to Naples, until both fell under the dominion of the Angevin prince, to whom the See of Rome had assigned the realm. The Sicilian Vespers severed the island from the continental realm, and under the rule of the house of Aragon, Sicily long continued independent, while Naples submitted to the sovereignty of the French kings.

Before the conquest of Charles of Anjou, parliamentary institutions had been common to both countries. In the events which followed that conquest the political institutions of Naples and Sicily became wholly different. Charles of Anjou claimed the crown by a title independent both of parliament and people—holding it by a grant from the Pope as its supreme feudal lord. The

right of the house of Arragon, although supported on something like hereditary descent, rested in truth upon the election of the parliament and the people. The result was that in Naples parliaments fell rapidly into disuse. In Sicily their privileges and powers were acknowledged and preserved.

The first parliaments of Sicily were assemblies of the nobles and prelates—Norman councils of the nation, to which it would seem the sovereigns were in the habit of summoning persons not belonging to the privileged order, to whom they thought proper to send their writs of invitation as men eminent for learning and wisdom.¹

This anomalous representation of the commonalty assumed in progress of time the form of a more regular system. To the legislation of the Emperor Frederick II. Sicily was indebted for the establishment of the parliamentary power of the commons upon a settled basis. He enfranchised all the towns in the royal domains. All persons who were owners of any property in these domain towns were exempted from feudal jurisdiction; to become the feudatory of any lord was made a high penal offence in the tenant of domain land. Several cities were enfranchised and invested with the same privileges, although not constituting a portion of the royal domains; and writs were issued to every

¹ The account of the old Sicilian constitution and laws will be found in Palmieri, "*Storia Costituzionale della Sicilia*;" Giannoni, "*Istoria Civile del Regno di Napoli*," "*Storia di Napoli*;" Gregorio, "*Introduzione allo studio del dritto Publico Siciliano*;" Filangieri, "*Scienza della Legislazione*;" Lord Brougham's "*Political Philosophy*," vol. i. chap. xvii. See especially Gregorio's "*Considerazioni sopra la Storia di Sicilia*," as well as the other authorities referred to in the note to Lord Brougham's 17th chapter.

enfranchised town, directing to send four deputies to parliament—two were summoned from each district and castle.

At this early period, therefore, was established in Sicily a system very nearly resembling that of the borough and county representation in England.

The Sicilian parliament consisted of three chambers, the nobles, the clergy, and the commons. The right of taxation and granting money was rigidly reserved to the parliament, but no distinction was made as in the English constitution in favour of the right of the commons exclusively to deal with finance. The clergy and the barons had an equal voice in voting the supplies, and to this no doubt we may attribute the fact that the commons in Sicily were never able to assume the position of influence and power which, by means of the command of the national exchequer, they have attained in the parliamentary system of England.

Those who have studied the growth of popular power in the English parliament, and have seen how entirely it depended upon the right claimed by the commons of exclusive control over taxation, will estimate the vast difference in the effect produced by parliamentary institutions in which the nobility and the clergy shared that control equally with the representatives of the people.

It made the constitution of the parliament in reality aristocratic. The burgesses had comparatively no influence in competition with the aristocratic orders. The great barons commanded to a very considerable extent the returns from the castles, the districts, and the towns ; so powerful indeed were they in Sicily, that even

when the Spanish viceroys governed the island, each of these received by established usage on assuming his office the significant instructions, "Coi baroni siete tutto, senza di essi siete nulla."²

The parliament thus constituted had great and acknowledged powers. No taxes could be imposed upon the people without its consent; it was bound to meet twice a year, and to sit on each occasion for at least eight days; to every member was expressly conceded the right of stating any grievance, or bringing forward any complaint of the conduct of any magistrate or official of the crown. New laws were proposed by an edict from the king, but had no validity until they had received the assent of the parliament, or, as the better opinion seems to be, of two of the three estates of which it was composed.

A right still more important in point of principle exercised by the parliament from the very earliest days, was that of confirming the title of each successive sovereign. It has been said that they elected; strictly speaking this is not true. All the monarchies of Europe were in one sense elective, the consent of the people was necessary to confirm, and their negative occasionally disturbed the claim of hereditary right; in no other sense does it appear that the Sicilian monarchy ever was elective. That which at first was the right of confirmation or even election, assumed at a very early period the form of investiture. Each succeeding monarch submitted to this formal recognition of the

² "With the barons you are everything, without them nothing."—*Wrightson's Italy*, p. 94.

superiority of parliament to the crown. Charles V. in the plenitude of his power, requested from the parliament the investiture of his monarchy in the island. He visited Sicily in person for the purpose of receiving it. Upon the occasion of that visit he opened the session of the Sicilian parliament, and solemnly took the oath to defend its rights and liberties. Succeeding monarchs were content to follow in his steps ; and, in 1735, Charles of Bourbon, received the usual investiture, and throughout his reign scrupulously respected the parliamentary privileges and rights.

The treaty of Utrecht recognised indeed those privileges as part of the European public law. In the act which assigned Sicily to the Duke of Savoy, it expressly bound the new sovereign in the name of all the powers to confirm and ratify all the rights of the Sicilian parliament.

It is impossible not to perceive the close analogy between the nature and early growth of parliamentary institutions in Sicily and England. An examination of the writ issued for the return of deputies to the Sicilian parliament, shows it to be almost identical with that in use for the purpose of commanding the election of burgesses to our own.³

In other respects, the analogy between the two institutions of the two countries is even still more striking. The tenures of land were partly feudal under the Norman, partly allodial under the Lombard law.

³ Lord Brougham has supplied the form of the Sicilian Writ. It is framed in the most precise analogy with that which directs the return of burgesses to the English parliament.

The first descended by the law of primogeniture, the last were divided among the children in accordance with the German custom, still prevailing in some English counties, of gavelkind. As in England, baronial jurisdictions claimed an extensive share in the administration of justice. The feudal barons, and the lords of the Church, held courts in which they exercised jurisdiction over their vassals or dependencies. The decisions of these courts, in accordance with the principles of the feudal system, were subject to an appeal to the courts of the king as lord paramount and supreme. The great judicial officers of the king were—his high chancellor, chief of the magistracy, and president of the council; his high justiciary almost identical with the great functionary of our English jurisprudence in earlier times; the chamberlain (“camerario”) the chief officer of the king’s revenue, exercising as such the judicial authority which was conceded in England “to the chancellor and barons” of the exchequer of the king.

Notwithstanding this free constitution; the government by viceroys, and the long subjection of the people to foreign rule, had produced their natural effect. The preponderance of the barons in the parliament deprived it of the power of the popular element, and consequently of the sympathy and interest of the people. The maxim of Spain we have seen was to govern through the barons, and they had therefore little occasion to use the privileges of the parliament against the crown. The result was that both its legislative functions and its higher duties as a committee of grievances fell into disuse. Its prerogatives in taxation

were respected, and no imposts were levied upon Sicily, except with its consent. Thus, while in point of legal right it continued to exist with powers and privileges which might at any time assert the freedom of the nation, it was practically only an aristocratic conclave in which the barons determined the amount of taxation which they were willing to permit to be levied by the crown.

It must be admitted that this institution, however it may have protected the independence, and in some sense maintained the freedom of the island, had not been successful in giving to the Sicilians the benefit either of wise laws or of that prosperity to which the natural resources of their country entitled them. Oppressive feudal restrictions and privileges interfered with industry and with the progress of a middle class to wealth and independence.

These grievances were mitigated, but not altogether removed, by the wise and liberal legislation of Frederick. The parliament of Sicily was never strong enough in the spirit of popular freedom either to get rid of these feudal oppressions or to prevent the evils which the government of viceroys inflicted on the country.

It must not, however, be supposed that her parliamentary institutions were without their fruit. It was no trifling achievement to have preserved the existence of a parliament, with its essential principle of national sovereignty, against the power of all the foreign dynasties by which the island was successively ruled. That institution maintained for ten centuries the right of taxation in the parliament alone—it preserved the

separate existence of Sicily against all the influences which perpetually tended to its subjugation to the more powerful kingdom on the continent. It compelled the kings of Spain to govern by a separate viceroy, maintain a separate administration, and respect the essential distinctions of the Sicilian institutions and Sicilian laws. Neither did it altogether fail in maintaining the spirit of civil or, even of religious liberty, as far as either, especially the latter, could then be understood. The provisions for securing personal liberty anticipated their adoption in England. The independence of the national Church and bishops was maintained against the encroachments of the Papal See, and when the bigotry of the Spanish monarch attempted to introduce the inquisition of the ruling country into the dependent island, a popular commotion supported by the barons twice signally defeated the attempt.⁴

When the supreme authority was distant, and the legislative powers of the domestic parliament had fallen into disuse, we cannot expect to find any wise or vigorous effort to correct administrative abuse; the laws of Sicily were not from time to time adapted to the growing wants of the people. The procedure in the courts of law was in the nineteenth century embarrassed and complicated, not by the maxims and formalities of the tenth, but by the learned confusion in which the mischievous ingenuity of lawyers had in the course of many centuries involved them. The local courts of justice under the appointments of feudal lords,

⁴ Giannone's "*Istoria Civile di Napoli*," lib. 32—34; Reumont's "*History of the Carafas*;" Perceval's "*Italy*," chap. ix.; Muratori.

exhibited all the forms of abuse which have been known in similar institutions in other countries, and the delays and expense of the superior courts were so great, that many of the Sicilians who made the experiment, found the speedy injustice of the feudal tribunals, a less evil than the slow, and in the end uncertain, justice of the higher courts.

In other respects the internal administration of the island was embarrassed by antiquated and absurd regulations. In the department of that which may be termed preventive justice, the care of each district was confided to an officer annually appointed by the crown, called Captain of Justice: to him were left entirely the regulations for the suppression of crime. He was personally responsible for the value of all losses sustained by an individual through a robbery committed within his district, or, as we would say, bailiwick, between sunrise and sunset.⁵ These strict provisions failed entirely in their intended effect. The Captain of Justice was obliged to make the provisions for suppression of brigandage at his own cost. It is said that the appointment to this expensive and troublesome office was frequently made the means of punishing an obnoxious individual. A succession of officers, each holding his office for a year, could hardly be expected to establish a permanent system of effective arrangements; the effect of the energy of one was destroyed by the weakness or inattention of his successor. Brigandage grew up to be a system, and it was found

⁵ Botta, vol. iii.

impossible to enforce against the Captain of Justice that remedy against which natural justice revolted.

The want of any effective local administration was manifest in the entire neglect of the means of internal transit, except in the vicinity of the great towns ; throughout the rest of the country the communications, even in the beginning of the present century, were carried on by narrow and difficult paths, accessible only to pedestrians and mules.⁶ The result of this was, that the proprietors were wholly separated from their estates. They lived in the cities, and had no residences in the districts from which they derived their rents. Most of them, indeed, passed their lives without ever seeing their properties. Left to themselves, the peasantry made no improvements in the traditions of ancient times. The plough of the Georgics was the only one in use in 1810, and in that year we find the ox still treading out the corn as he had done in Judæa in the time of the composition of the Psalms.⁷

As if, however, to destroy every hope of an improved agriculture, a corn-law existed of such a character as to surprise us with the strange ingenuity of its invention : the exportation of corn-grain was prohibited not only from the island, but virtually from one little district to another. The country was divided into districts each extending over a circle of several miles ; in each of these was established a corporation whose members were appointed by the crown. Upon them was thrown

⁶ Report on the state of Sicily, in " Lord Castlereagh's Despatches," vol. vi. p. 182.

⁷ Report in the Castlereagh Papers.

the obligation of supplying the district with bread—that is, they had a monopoly of the supply of bread, coupled with the condition that they should find sufficient for the wants of the people for whom they were appointed to provide.⁸

To enable them to fulfil this contract, they had a monopoly of purchase as well as sale ; the farmer in the district was not at liberty to sell to any one else until the corporation had declared that they had sufficient to supply the district with bread. This was virtually to permit them to fix their own price. They did so both in the purchase and the sale. To the lowness of the price which they gave for the corn they had no other limit than that at which the peasant could continue to raise it and the baron to receive his rents. The price at which they sold the bread was raised to the utmost they could extort from the people ; they did not even trouble themselves to provide bakers' shops : in the rural districts persons were obliged to come several miles for the purchase of their loaf.

The object of this institution was no doubt originally to secure to the people of each district a constant and regular supply of the prime necessary of life—to dispose of it direct from the producer to the consumer without permitting it to be carried away elsewhere, or enhanced in its price by the artifices of jobbers. The enormous profits realised by these contractors were a fraud upon their intended functions, which were merely those of dispensers of the corn. The rates both of the purchase and the sale were supposed

⁸ See Castlereagh Papers, as above.

to be fixed upon an equitable adjustment of the necessities of the district, and the quantity of the crop. If they were not so, the contractors were liable to severe punishments ; and occasionally when their conduct became very flagrant these punishments were inflicted. Generally, however, they escaped either from the difficulty that stood in the way of complaint, or by the employment of well-directed bribes. Such was the practical effect of a system elaborately framed to secure that which has been the object of many English laws—a market for the grower and a steady supply of food to the consumer. The most ardent admirers of government interference in such matters must admit that the principle may be carried too far. Even the evils of “forestalling” and “regrating,” against which our own laws but a few years ago denounced the severest penalties, may be prevented at too dear a cost. In Sicily at least no natural effect of the laws of supply and demand could have been worse than that of the expedient by which the wisdom of government attempted to control them.

The result was such that in the beginning of the present century, Sicily which had been once the granary of Rome, produced scarcely sufficient to supply its own people with food. Years of scarcity were of frequent occurrence ; not more than one-third of the country was cultivated, and that with the imperfect agriculture of ancient times ; whole districts lay depopulated and waste. Some of the barons still possessed great fortunes whose estates lay contiguous to towns, but many of those who owned estates in remote districts were

reduced to absolute poverty ; living in the cities in the mansions of their ancestors, they were without the means of supplying their daily wants. Beyond the shopkeepers in the towns a middle class was utterly unknown. Commerce there was none ; the whole island scarcely possessed a decked vessel. All that could be called trade was that of the coasters, and a traffic in wine in the hands of a very few English merchants resident in the ports. Everything appears to have been done to repress, nothing to develop the resources of a country blessed with magnificent advantages, or to promote the prosperity of a people who only needed encouragement, or rather fair play, to rival in skill, in ingenuity and intelligence, those of any nation upon earth. Nor was education in Sicily very widely diffused. In the year 1810 we find it stated, and there is no reason to doubt the substantial accuracy of the statement, that in the whole island there were not more than 1500 persons who could read and write.⁹

Such was Sicily at the period when it became the centre of English movements in the Mediterranean, and the scene of those plots and intrigues by which a vicious and unprincipled court attempted to defeat the efforts of an enlightened and liberal statesman to secure to the island good government and freedom. If the description that has been given above does not seem entirely to bear out the glowing accounts that have been made of the happiness and prosperity of Sicily under its old constitution, we must at the same time remember that for these evils its parliament was not responsible. The

⁹ Castlereagh Papers.

very constitution under which it assembled required that all legislative changes should originate with the crown. The system of viceregal government prevented any real improvement in administration, and the want of a vigorous and active popular element in the parliament rendered it powerless to force reforms upon the indifference of a governor who had no real interest in the prosperity of the island.

After all, in many respects the condition of Sicily was not worse in point of progress than had been that of many districts which had long enjoyed the full advantages of the constitution of Britain. A century ago in England, at a much later period in Scotland and Ireland, there were extensive districts in which the roads were as neglected,—in which rules almost as vexatious prevailed—in which agriculture was practised after a fashion as primitive—and where education was not more general than it appears to have been among the Sicilian people.

If the parliament of Sicily had not been able to counteract the evils of a misrule for which it was in no case responsible, it had yet maintained under circumstances of difficulty and trial its own privileges, and had preserved, with all the authority of prescription, and the veneration that belongs to the institutions of remote antiquity, a system which possessed at all events the framework of a free constitution.

It was reserved for Ferdinand in the very hour when Sicily offered him a shelter in his distress to make an attempt to destroy the privileges of that parliament with which neither the most powerful nor the most tyran-

nical of his predecessors had ventured to interfere—the right of exclusive control over the taxation of the country was the first of those privileges assailed by a needy and unprincipled court.

The first dispute between privilege and prerogative occurred in 1798. The king of the Two Sicilies was peculiarly circumstanced in relation to his two realms. In Naples even the form of parliamentary institutions had long since disappeared. There the monarch was absolute, while on the other side of the straits his power was controlled by those privileges of parliament which still remained.

The severity with which Jacobinism was punished in Naples in 1798, extended to Sicily, although in a mitigated form. We may, however, form an idea of the manner in which the people were treated from the fact that in the official calendar of the island there are recorded sentences of exile for the offence of reading the newspapers with delight.—“*Pro lectura gazettarum cum nimia delectatione.*”¹⁰ It is perhaps to be presumed, although not so stated, that the newspapers were those which recorded the triumphs of the republican arms. Even with this explanation it must be remembered that at that time France and Naples were at peace.

The unpopularity of these acts induced a reluctance on the part of the parliament to grant supplies. At last the king demanded a perpetual subsidy. Parliament refused. The court of Naples had determined on the step of arresting the dissentients, and levying taxes by the authority of the crown, when the approach of the

¹⁰ Amari, “*La Sicile et les Bourbons*,” p. 16.

French armies to Naples interrupted the design, and flying to Palermo for refuge, and compelled to allow that city to be garrisoned by English troops, the queen, the real director of the government, abandoned, or rather postponed, her attacks upon the liberty of her Sicilian subjects.¹¹

From the year 1806 a large military force was maintained by England in Sicily. Commanded first by Sir James Craig, afterwards by Sir John Stuart; for a short interval by General Fox, Sir John Moore, and finally by Lord William Bentinck—the British troops effectually guarded Sicily from the French. A naval squadron co-operated with the land forces. The fleet was at first under the command of Sir Sidney Smith, then of Lord Collingwood, then of Lord Exmouth. During the greater part of the period, a British diplomatist of high rank resided at Palermo, and represented his sovereign at the court of the king.

It was, during the second retirement of the Neapolitan court to Palermo, that the attack was made upon the Sicilian constitution, which finally compelled the British government to interfere with a high hand, when no choice was left them between protecting the rights of the Sicilian parliament, or an appearance in the odious character of supporting by their troops the tyrannical attempt of the court to subvert its acknowledged privileges.

The history of that interference constitutes one of the strangest, and not the least important portions of the modern annals of Italy. To that interference

¹¹ Amari.

many of the Sicilians still attribute the loss of their parliamentary institutions, which surviving all the attacks of their enemies, fell at last from the effects of the ill-omened protection of their friends. By the attempt on the part of England to consolidate and extend Sicilian liberties, these liberties were ultimately destroyed. The story of the residence of the Neapolitan royal family at Palermo, from 1806 to 1815, is little more than the record of the intrigues and devices by which a feeble and worthless court, supported by British money and protected only by British arms, were yet able to baffle all the efforts of England to establish representative government in the island.

CHAPTER X.

English occupation of Sicily—Sir John Stuart—Descent on Calabria—Battle of Maida—General Fox—Sir John Moore—Atrocities committed—Laws of Murat to suppress them—Fearful Cruelties—General Manhes—Sir Sydney Smith—Escape of Naples—Taking of Capri—Intrigues of Queen Caroline—Attempted Invasion of Sicily—Repulsed by Sir John Stuart—Retirement of Sir John Stuart—Duke of Kent solicits to be appointed in his place—Lord William Bentinck—Violent proceedings of the Sicilian Court—Cruelties at Messina—Illegal Taxation—Parliamentary Protest—Arrest of the five Barons—Lord William Bentinck's visit to England—He returns with fuller powers—Compels the King to appoint the Duke of Calabria Vicar-General—Release of the Barons—A Liberal Ministry—Parliament of 1812—Settlement of the Constitution—Abolition of feudal rights—Despatch of Lord Castlereagh—Conduct of the Queen—Violent attempt of the King to resume his authority—The Queen compelled to leave the Island—Lord William Bentinck leaves for Spain—Ministerial dissensions—Parliamentary plots—Return of Bentinck—Dissolution of Parliament—New Elections—Triumph of the constitutional party—Second absence of Lord William Bentinck—Reactionary intrigues—The King resumes his authority—Final retirement of Bentinck—Mr. A'Court his successor—William the Good and William the Bad—Royal intrigues against the Constitution—Proposal to change it—Dissolution of Parliament—King returns to Naples—His Proclamations.

ON the 19th of February 1806, the British troops which had passed over from Naples nearly a month before, were permitted to disembark from their transports and occupy the town and fortress of Messina. Thus began that British occupation of the island which for nine years protected even against their own intrigues with their enemies, the court of the Neapolitan

Bourbons. The circumstances have been already told under which the British general felt it his duty to retreat with his army into Sicily, with a view of carrying out those instructions which enjoined him in the last resort to preserve, at all hazards, Sicily, as a post for the British army. Every effort was made by the queen to prevent the landing of the English troops in Sicily.¹ She felt that their presence would defeat the objects of arbitrary power, to the accomplishment of which she was ready to sacrifice every other consideration. In these proceedings Caroline was not actuated by any high ambition, but the violence of her temper carried her to make any effort, however desperate, to gratify the passions of her ungovernable will.

From the time of the flight of the royal family to Naples, her violence involved her in frequent disagreements with the English, to whose protection nevertheless she owed her safety, and from whom she was all the time receiving a subsidy which was the principal means of meeting the expenses of the court.

The preservation of Sicily was considered an object of essential importance by the British cabinet. That island supplied a point from which they could harass their enemy on the Italian continent. So long as a British fleet commanded the Mediterranean and a British force occupied Sicily, ready to make a descent upon any part of the Italian coast, the French were compelled to keep a large body of troops in Italy for its defence. The presence of an English army thus neutralised a much larger number of the troops of their

¹ See *ante*, chap. ix. General Bunbury's "Narrative," p. 217.

opponents. The Sicilians understood perfectly well that these circumstances influenced the English cabinet in the protection which they gave them.²

The proclamation of Joseph, as King of Naples, excited the utmost rage at the court of Palermo. The queen vehemently urged the invasion of the country. Insurrections in Calabria were disturbing the peace of the new government and these were represented as indications of a universal feeling in favour of the Bourbons. Sir John Stuart took the place of Sir John Craig in command of the British troops. He had been with the British army when the abandonment of the Neapolitan territory had been resolved on, and the reasons which then made it appear impossible to defend that territory, still made it, in his judgment, useless to seize on it only that it might be again abandoned. He was overruled, or rather over-persuaded, by the more sanguine councils of the hero of Acre, and in the summer of 1806, the British troops effected a landing on the Calabrian coast.

The result was that glorious victory of Maida, in which higher honour was gained than in many conflicts in which far more numerous forces were engaged. Sir John Stuart, with about 5000 English troops, completely defeated a much larger number of French. The result was that the French were successively driven from every post they occupied in Lower Calabria. The people everywhere rose against them.

² It would appear that this was originally the plan of the emigrant French general Dumourier. See a most able memoir drawn up by him in Lord Castlereagh's Despatches, vol. viii. p. 256.

The peasantry formed themselves into guerilla bands. The troops of bandits that infested the forest-covered defiles of the provinces—were partisans of the exiled king. The insurrection spread into Upper Calabria. The British admiral, who had been appointed his Vicar-General by the king, moved his ships along the coast, supplying arms and provisions to the insurgents, and occasionally carrying their bands from place to place. All this, however, could not enable Sir John Stuart to retain the country he had won. He soon discovered that his predatory allies were not to be depended on in an engagement with regular troops in the field ; the object of most of them was plunder, and they were just as ready to rob the English as the French. Unable to defend his acquisition against the force which Massena was marching into Calabria, the British general retreated.

From the very moment of their landing in the island, the queen had regarded with intense hatred the presence of the British troops. She had made application to the Russian cabinet to send a force into Sicily that might rescue the island from the influence of England,³ and there is little reason to doubt that so early as the year 1807, and not long after the battle of Maida, she opened through the Spanish court negotiations with Napoleon which certainly a few years later assumed a definite and distinct form.⁴

Her feelings of dislike to England were increased by the negotiations which were opened with Napoleon by the ministry of Mr. Fox ; in those negotiations the British minister had proposed terms of peace which

³ Bunbury's Narrative.

⁴ Bunbury's Narrative, page 389.

would have left Murat on the throne of Naples. The negotiations were finally broken off by the refusal of England to deprive Ferdinand of the island of Sicily, even with the offer of indemnity elsewhere.⁵ It was in defence of the rights of Ferdinand to Sicily that the war continued. This, however, did not atone, in the eyes of the violent Caroline, for the proposal to give up Naples, and her irritation was aggravated by the accident of the appearance in Sicily, as commander of the British forces, of General Fox, the brother of the statesman who had commenced and conducted the obnoxious negotiations with France. On the fall of that ministry, she openly expressed her joy at the prospect of a government in England more likely to sympathise with her own political views.

General Fox was accompanied to Sicily by Sir John Moore. Both these officers were of higher rank than Sir John Stuart; the latter returned to England. He was soon followed by General Fox, and Sir John Moore remained in command of the troops.

The two years during which Sir John Moore remained in Sicily, were spent in a constant struggle on his part to resist the plan of the invasion of Naples, which the queen was perseveringly urging. Mr. Drummond, the British minister, who had at first strongly opposed the views of the queen, was induced by her flatteries to take her part. The Russian representative "insisted" on behalf of his imperial master that an expedition should be undertaken against Naples. Lord Castlereagh

⁵ Diplomatic Correspondence. Annual Register, 1806. State Papers, pp. 703—792. Parliamentary Papers, 1806.

sent similar instructions to General Fox, upon the supposition that the Sicilian and English armies together would form an invading force of 20,000 men.⁶ The British general, after providing for the garrisons of Sicily, could have sent about 5000. The state of Ferdinand's army was such as to make their co-operation an incumbrance instead of a support.

The queen's indiscretion revealed the real motive of the vehemence with which she pressed her proposal. It was pointed out to her by General Fox, that although it was possible to take Naples, it was perfectly impossible to hold it with the forces which were at his disposal; he urged that the effect of an attack would be to inflict incalculable evil upon the city which her majesty yet hoped to possess as her capital—only to abandon it after a short and not very creditable occupation. In one of those ungovernable fits of temper, in which she lost all self-control, she exclaimed in reply: "Give me Naples for twenty-four hours—it is all I ask, it will be long enough for vengeance on the rebels." The argument astonished, but did not convince the British general. Sir John Moore did not hesitate to record his opinion that it was indispensable to the peace of Sicily that the queen should be compelled to leave the island for Trieste.

The attempts to excite insurrections in Calabria, were soon found to be little more than licenses for pillage and murder in the name of the British crown. In the first exile of the royal family, Caroline had adopted the system of using the aid of the desperate characters

⁶ Lord Castlereagh to General Fox, May 21, 1807.

who, at all times, infested the wooded regions of Calabria, by taking the bold step of engaging in her service some of the most sanguinary miscreants who had made themselves notorious by their crimes. To one of these men, an escaped convict from the galleys, she had compelled her reluctant husband to subscribe a letter, in which she had styled him the king's dear friend.⁷ The same system was now revived, but on a wider scale. Persons who called themselves captains of the people, professed to head companies of patriotic insurgents, which were in reality bands of lawless robbers. While villages were devoted to pillage and massacre, under the pretence that their inhabitants were partisans of the French, the houses of the gentry were plundered under colour of the same convenient excuse. As soon as French troops showed themselves, these wretches fled to the shelter of the mountains and woods. They were only formidable to the peaceful inhabitants of the district which they ravaged.⁸

The British generals, apprised of these outrages, were at last compelled peremptorily to discontinue the supply of arms. A detachment of British troops was actually sent across the straits to protect the inhabitants of one district from the lawless violence of these allies of the queen.

So long as Sir Sidney Smith remained upon the station, he continued, even against the opinion of the generals, to encourage these movements. Arms and provisions were still distributed to almost all who chose

⁷ Colletta.

⁸ Sir John Stuart to General Fox, August 26, 1806.

to ask for them.⁹ The British ships were crowded with ferocious looking brigands, who were frequently carried long distances along the coast in the flag-ship of the admiral himself. Even then the weapons with which they were supplied, were more frequently used against the inhabitants than against the French.

After the departure of Sir Sidney Smith the British generals in every way discountenanced the employment of these nefarious allies, but it continued with little intermission throughout the whole residence of the Neapolitan family in Sicily. Calabria has not yet recovered from the devastations which were inflicted upon it by this, which cannot be called, civilised, warfare. A rapacious and ignorant peasantry had been trained to pillage and blood. Murat, in 1810, made a desperate effort to restore peace to the district, by a law almost more terrible than the evils it suppressed. In that year General Manhes was sent into the province with orders to exterminate the brigands, whose names in each commune were placed in a list. Every person whose name appeared on the list was shot whenever he was found. To prevent any food being conveyed to the fugitives, carrying provisions in the fields was made a crime punishable with death. The slightest succour or even encouragement to one of the proscribed was a capital offence. These merciless laws were relentlessly executed. Peasants who thoughtlessly carried bread in their pockets on their way to a distant field of labour were met by the patrol and shot.

⁹ Letter of Sir John Moore to General Fox, August 24, 1806—*Bunbury's Narrative*.

Fathers were executed for giving food to their sons. In one instance the wife of a brigand gave birth to an infant in their concealment in the wood. The unhappy mother crawled from her hiding-place by night and left her new-born babe with a woman who had been her neighbour and her friend. The charitable reception of the infant was succouring a brigand within the meaning of the king's decree, and Manhes directed the humanity of the nurse to be punished with death. Next day a file of grenadiers approached her little cottage and hanged her at her own door.¹⁰

Retaliations like these did little to humanise the society which was already demoralised by the organisation of brigandage as a profession. The tranquillity of the district was too dearly purchased by acts like those committed in the name of the governors of the land. We involuntarily think of retribution when we remember that the king who issued these decrees met his end within the very districts in which his authority sanctioned these horrors, and was himself shot as a brigand, under one of the very laws which he had himself enacted as a part of this bloodstained and terrible code.

The hero of Acre had very little notion of the true nature of the warfare he was exciting. In the picturesque robbers who crowded the deck of his vessel he saw the rough but honest defenders of their sovereign—patriots, who if they dealt mercilessly with the invader, would die themselves to rid their native soil of

¹⁰ These atrocities are stated on the authority of Colletta, who certainly cannot be supposed inclined to exaggerate the cruelties of a government under which he held office.

the presence of the foe. Seduced by those fascinating attentions, the power of which Caroline perfectly understood, he had adopted the ideas and entered into the views of the queen.¹¹ He believed her stories of the devoted attachment of the Neapolitan people to herself, and he did not hesitate bitterly to censure the remissness of the commanders who would not trust to the loyal bravery of these devoted subjects, and strike one bold blow to restore to them the sovereign of their affection and their hearts.

Far far indeed was that brave and generous spirit from sympathising with the almost fiendish desire for vengeance which had taken possession of the queen. There are few incidents more striking than that which he has himself recorded, of his passing close to Naples when the glare of the illuminated city flung over the bay the symbol of rejoicing for the proclamation of Joseph Buonaparte, their new king. On the very night of that illumination, Sir Sidney Smith approached Naples with five British men-of-war.

"The city," he writes in his despatch to the Admiralty, "was illuminated on account of Joseph Buonaparte proclaiming himself King of the Two Sicilies. The junction of the Eagle made us five sail of the

¹¹ The following letter from the queen to Sir Sydney Smith fell into the hands of Mr. Drummond, and was forwarded by him to General Fox :—

"J'ai reçois la désagréable nouvelle que l'inférieure intrigue et cabale a provoqué : quelconque en sera le résultat, de loin ou de près, je serai toujours votre éternellement attachée et reconnaissante amie,

"CHARLOTTE."

"With an ingenious device, by way of flourish, where a heart is represented in the midst of flames."—*Letter of Mr. Drummond to General Fox. Bunbury's Narrative.*

line, and it would have been easy to have interrupted the show and festivity ; but I considered that the unfortunate inhabitants have evil enough on them ; that the restoration of the capital to its lawful sovereign and fugitive inhabitants would be no gratification if it should be found a heap of ruins, ashes, and bones ; and that as I had no force to land and keep order in case of the French army retiring to the fortresses, I should leave an opulent city a prey to the licentious part of the community, who would not fail to profit by the confusion the flames would occasion. Not a gun was fired.”¹²

On the same night, and still within sight of the illuminations of the city, he attacked the fortress island of Capri, and after a brisk cannonade he carried its almost inaccessible heights by storm. The cannonade was distinctly heard in the palace of Joseph by the festive throng that filled its saloons. It reverberated through the streets of Naples over the waters of the bay, and many an anxious watch was kept that night through the agitated city.

In April, 1808, Sir John Stuart returned to the command of the British troops in Sicily. Sir John Moore had gone to lead that expedition, in which he found on the heights of Corunna a soldier's grave. Lord Amherst was accredited to Palermo as the representative of the King of England. The relations of Sir John Stuart with the court, during his second residence in Sicily, were even less harmonious than they had been during his first.

Caroline, accustomed at Naples to regard the services

¹² Despatches of Sir Sidney Smith. Sir John Barrow's "Life of Sir Sydney Smith."—*Annual Register*, 1814.

of spies and informers as essential to the existence of the monarchy, could not divest herself of her continental habits of rule. Her employment of these disgraceful instruments of government soon became the subject of universal odium and complaint. The people revenged themselves by caricatures and pasquinades. At a masquerade ball at the British ambassador's, some young Sicilian nobles appeared in the character of spies, in a dress which represented them as all ears and tongues.¹³ They acted this practical satire on the government in the presence of the queen. Unhappily the personal habits of her majesty were not calculated to win for her much respect. At the age of sixty she put no restraint upon her passions. The stimulant of opium kept her in a state of excitement bordering upon intoxication. But the constant resort to this fatal stimulus, could not disguise the ravages which age and dissipation were making upon her temper and her frame.

Nothing could be worse than the management of public affairs. The extravagance of the court exhausted their slender resources in an attempt to maintain upon the revenue of Sicily alone, the same splendour and extravagance which the united exchequers of the two countries had been hardly able to support. The system of espionage was practised by the queen upon a scale so extensive, and maintained by an expenditure so profuse, as to amount to a very serious encroachment upon her limited means. The exiles, who had accompanied her from Naples, were a heavy drain upon the treasury, and a grievous source of offence to the

¹³ Lord Valentia's MS. Journal.

Sicilians. Mismanagement produced its natural result, and the sums that were thus improperly squandered, left the treasury unable to meet its legitimate demands.

The pay of the army fell into arrear, the soldiers were said at times to want the common necessities of life, their uniforms were in rags, and their condition was the more intolerable, from their being brought in contact with the British troops, who were at least provided with everything requisite to keep them from actual want. Remonstrances from the British officials but inflamed the violence and exasperated the enmity of the queen. After the marriage of her grand-daughter with Napoleon she openly expressed her annoyance at the presence of the British troops. Secretly she opened a correspondence with the French emperor, and offered to concert measures for betraying the island to his invading troops.

Napoleon had too much experience of the queen implicitly to trust her, but there is no doubt that the result of these intrigues was the attempt at the invasion of Sicily by Murat in the summer of 1810.¹⁴ Caroline had represented to Napoleon that the Sicilian people were ready to break out into open revolt against their English oppressors as soon as they saw a French force approaching the island. Napoleon directed Murat to make the attempt; but secretly gave orders to General Regnier, who commanded the French auxiliaries, not to cross the straits, except in support of an insurrection

¹⁴ Colletta's "History of Naples," book vii. chap. ii. The facts relating to the Sicilian invasion are collected in a note to Bunbury's Narrative, p. 289; "Naples par Charles Paya," p. 227, Pantaleoni et Lumia "Droits Politiques de la Sicile," p. 40.

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in Sicily. He had another object in the display, to prevent any assistance being sent from Sicily to Lord Wellington in Spain.

In resisting the threatened attack, Sir John Stuart received but little support from the Sicilian court. The people shouted everywhere for King George ;¹⁵ but the royal party at Palermo showed no sign of care, and the British general was left almost unaided, with his own force of 15,000, to resist the threatened invasion of Murat, with a well equipped army of 40,000 men.

The sea, however, intervened. Upon each side of the narrow straits of Messina the hostile armies were encamped. The army of Murat, 40,000 strong, was bivouacked on the heights of Scylla ; 15,000 English were spread along ten miles of the coast from Messina to Faro point. Under the protection of the batteries, 208 gun-boats lay close to the once formidable rock of Scylla ; 700 boats, of other descriptions, waited the embarkation of the troops. On the British side four line of battle ships, with several frigates and smaller vessels, were lying at anchor within the straits, ready to assail with their destructive fire the first of the flotilla which should attempt to cross the narrow sea that divided the hostile camps.¹⁶

Almost daily skirmishes took place between some of the British squadron and the gun-boats of Murat. These isolated engagements could, of course, be attended with

¹⁵ "The bells clanged from every little village, and the peasants, grasping whatever weapons they could find, were shouting on every height, Viva Ré Georgio, and exhibiting by their gestures the fiercest hostility to the invaders."—*Bunbury's Narrative*, p. 401.

¹⁶ Letter of the Adjutant-General.—*Bunbury's Narrative*, p. 397.

no decisive result. The batteries over the rock of Scylla threw shells which crossed the strait, and fell within the British lines. The mortars of the British returned the fire, and for weeks in succession, the strait was each night illuminated by the blaze of the shells, that flew from side to side, like meteors through the air. This nocturnal display, described as beautiful by those who witnessed it, produced but little damage upon either side. Any actual advantage that was gained, was with the British. Several vessels of the Neapolitan flotilla were captured. At last, on the 18th of September, about 3500 men of Murat's army succeeded in accomplishing the passage, and effecting a landing near the Faro point ; unsupported by any following troops, they were speedily repulsed, and retired to their gun-boats, with the loss of 800 of their comrades left prisoners in the hands of the defenders of the Sicilian soil.

Murat soon afterwards finally abandoned the attempt, and consoled himself for its failure by a proclamation, in which he assured his soldiers that though the expedition to Sicily was adjourned, the object of the king in menacing that island had been fulfilled ; it had been proved that the enemy's flotilla could not obstruct the passage, and that Sicily could be conquered whenever its conquest should be seriously intended.

The conduct of the court in this transaction convinced Sir John Stuart of the impossibility of maintaining his position, while invested with no political authority to control the machinations of the queen. In October he wrote to Lord Liverpool, resigning his command ; while, in the same letter, he made the strongest

representation of the dangers he apprehended from the suspicious movements of the court of Palermo.¹⁷

These representations determined the British cabinet on recalling their civil representative and uniting in one person the functions of diplomacy and of supreme military command.¹⁸

In selecting a person to fill this important post, the choice of the cabinet fell upon Lord William Bentinck. The Duke of Kent earnestly solicited the appointment from his brother, who in consequence of the illness of the king had just been invested with the powers of Prince Regent. Probably had the request been made while the king was still capable of transacting public business, it would not have been refused. The Prince Regent assured his brother that he had made every effort to obtain for him the appointment, but that his ministers had thought it absolutely necessary to conciliate the political influence of the great family to which Lord William Bentinck belonged.¹⁹

Considerations of state or of ministerial policy prevented the appointment of one of the royal family of England to head the struggle in Italy for the independence of nations. On the 4th day of February, the Gazette contained the appointment of Lord William Bentinck as envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary to the court of Palermo, and the command of all the British forces both military and naval was annexed to this appointment.

¹⁷ Sir John Stuart to Lord Liverpool, October 23, 1810.

¹⁸ Bunbury's Narrative.

¹⁹ The fact of the application, the refusal, and the excuse, were told by the Duke of Kent himself to Lord Valentia.—*Lord Valentia's MS. Journal.*

Lord William Bentinck landed at Palermo on the 1st of July, 1811. The court had already proceeded to arbitrary measures, which threw the whole kingdom into a ferment. Disappointed in the attempt at the Sicilian invasion, an attempt which, as far as he was concerned, was sincere, Murat had endeavoured to gain possession of Messina, by sending emissaries to form republican conspiracies among the people. The attempt would not appear to have been attended with any great success. The French agents were only successful in engaging a small number of the inferior class of mechanics, and the whole affair was one that, after the arrest of the few persons who were implicated, might safely have been treated with contempt. This, however, would not have suited the temper of the queen, or the interest of those who were employed by her in the profitable office of spies. It was represented to Caroline that the French never would have entrusted a conspiracy to the wretched instruments who had as yet been detected. The very difficulty of tracing any connection with persons of higher rank, was but a proof of the formidable nature of the conspiracy, which thus continued to baffle the efforts used for its detection. Hints were thrown out of suspicions gravely implicating men in a higher station. The queen was assured that it was essential to her safety that every means should be taken to bring to light the entire of this mysterious confederation.

The queen sent to Messina the Marquis Antale, who executed his mission of investigation in a spirit worthy of the court by whom he was sent. The laws of

Sicily were unhesitatingly violated in the means to which he resorted. A number of persons were immediately arrested—most of them of the humbler classes, but some few belonging to the higher ranks of society. They were treated in a manner which recalls to mind the atrocities of which, in the days of classical antiquity, Sicily had been the theatre.

The great object was to extort a confession. The prisoners were carried off suddenly from their homes. They were flung into some of the dungeons scooped out of the rock, which are become familiar objects in the history of Neapolitan prisons. They were formed below the level of the sea, and of a size so small that they did not permit their wretched inmates to lie at full length, or even to stand upright. In these dungeons, their life sustained only by bread and water, some of the miserable victims were immured uncondemned for weeks. Torture was employed to extract confessions of their guilt. It is stated upon trustworthy authority that the process of scalping was adopted in detail by the application of pincers to the skin. The torture of the rack was too commonplace to suit the refined cruelty of these ingenious tormentors, and they endeavoured to supplement its deficient cruelty by new contrivances, which, it may be hoped for the honour of human nature, were their own. Burning brands were applied to the most tender parts of the flesh, or they were torn with heated pincers ; deleterious drugs were given them to produce frightful dreams, on awaking from which they found themselves in contact with heated irons, while the agent of the police stood close to them,

to record as evidence for the queen the incoherent utterances of their waking fright.²⁰

These proceedings were known in Messina. The threats of the Marquis Antale spread terror through the town. No one could tell whose turn might come next. A loud outcry was raised against the British officers, who, it was said, had come to protect the people, but were now only protecting those who perpetrated against them these enormities.

On their being reported to Sir John Stuart, he sent Lord Forbes personally to examine into the facts. The mission of inquiry was significantly attended by a staff of surgeons. After the visit of the British officers, the atrocities were not repeated ; and when a little interval elapsed, the wretched survivors of these cruel tortures were released.

A very few days before the arrival of Lord William Bentinck, the indignation created by these atrocities had been merged in an excitement, produced by a still more daring violation on the part of the court, of the laws and liberties of the kingdom.

In the year 1810, the royal necessities had compelled the assembling of a parliament for the purpose of asking for more supplies. Every effort was

²⁰ The story of these cruelties is told with great minuteness by Botta : and there is no reason to doubt its correctness. See note B at the end of this volume.

The Queen boasted that she would bring about a state of things in which the character of a spy would be no longer infamous. Every morning she received in silver specie 200 ounces which she distributed in the payment of her spies—this with 1200 ounces a day expended in the persons of the Neapolitan refugees, nearly exhausted the British subsidy.—*Lord Valentia's Journal*.

made by the queen and her minister Medici to obtain a majority : successful with the clergy and the commons, the ecclesiastical and territorial states, as they were called, they failed with the barons or the military state. The barons, under the guidance of the Prince Belmonte, one of the highest of their order in wealth as in ancestry and in rank, determined to make an effort to stay the ruin into which the country was fast falling from the measures of the queen. They commenced by offering to abandon on their own part many feudal privileges and all special exemptions from taxation, presenting, perhaps, the only instance in history of a privileged order voluntarily and without pressure surrendering their privileges to the public good.

They attempted, also, to correct the evils of the lawless state of the country, by substituting the institution of a regular police for the old and ineffectual plan of entrusting the preservation of the peace to the captains of justice. The court had the folly to throw opposition in the way of these reforms, unwilling, perhaps, that the parliament should gain the credit that would attend their achievement.

Parliament granted a subsidy, though not to the full extent of the demands of the minister. Belmonte succeeded in placing its application under stringent control. Unaccustomed to be thwarted, and blinded by her passions, the queen determined on the bold step of levying contributions without the authority of parliament.

In the beginning of the year 1811, two royal edicts were issued, one imposing an *ad valorem* stamp duty of

one per cent. upon all contracts, which the notaries were commanded to collect ; the other directing a sale by lottery of the possessions of the religious houses. The people determined to resist these measures. Contracts were all made without writing or the aid of the notary, and men in the gravest matters of business trusted to each other's honour, rather than incur the obnoxious tax. The tickets for the lotteries were bought only by the officials and dependents of the court. The popular feeling was seconded by the barons, forty-three of whom signed a remonstrance addressed to the king, against the imposition of taxes without the authority of parliament, which they truly represented as an unprecedented violation of the constitution.

Instead of yielding to the unquestionable arguments of this protest, the queen had the hardihood to arrest five of the barons who had taken the leading part in its preparation. On the 18th of July, the princes of Belmonte, of Castelnuovo, of Villa Franca, of Aci, and the Duke of Anjou, were seized at night and hurried off to separate prisons in islands on the coast. This bold and illegal step created universal consternation. Nothing but the presence of the English troops prevented an immediate revolt. The alarm and terror of the community at large were excited to the utmost by a proceeding, which not only violated all law but seemed emphatically designed to impress the lesson that no rank and no respect could protect anyone in the island from the vengeance of a power that alike disregarded law and public opinion ; the families of the barons were tormented by anxieties for their personal

safety ; and dark insinuations were circulated that assassination or poison could easily in the secret dungeons get rid of the enemies of the queen.

The Duke of Orleans, destined afterwards, as Louis Philippe, to fill the throne of France, was then in Sicily, having married Amelia, the daughter of the king. He exerted all his influence to dissuade his mother-in-law from this fatal step. His remonstrances were disregarded, as had been his advice against the violent acts which preceded, and naturally led to, this result.

In the very height of the ferment, occasioned by these proceedings, Lord William Bentinck reached Palermo. Every effort was made by the court to prevent his having intercourse with the Sicilians ; artifices were resorted to of the most paltry character to attain this end. Everything was done on the other hand to impress the Sicilians with the belief that the English general was the partisan of the court.²¹

On presenting his credentials to the court at Palermo, the British ambassador remonstrated against proceedings, the adoption of which, under their protection, he stated plainly the government of Britain would never sanction. The queen at this time believed herself secure of the support of France. French agents, under the disguise of Austrian couriers, had visited Palermo,

²¹ His servants were the spies of police, and when he was visited by some of the island nobility, their cards were returned to them, with an intimation that his excellency could only receive the visits of the English. As might be expected, this disgraceful and stupid artifice was successful only for a few days. It was discovered through the medium of Lord Valentia, who took upon himself to remonstrate with the astonished ambassador on the impolicy of such a step. Apologies were instantly sent to all to whom it could be ascertained that this insult had been offered.—*Lord Valentia's Journal*.

and urged the court to excite a popular commotion against the English. Under such influence the interference of Lord William Bentinck was haughtily rejected. "This man," said the king, "was sent to make bows, and not to dictate laws." The queen demanded from him the production of any instructions authorising him to interfere in Sicilian politics. And after several angry interviews, Bentinck determined to return to London, personally to represent to the cabinet the position of affairs.

In a few months he returned to Palermo, with authority from his government, if necessary, to employ the military force at his disposal, for the purpose of enforcing compliance with his demands. This authority was given him in a written despatch, and armed with this power, the ambassador of England once more presented himself to the queen.

He took first the precaution of gathering round Palermo the entire British force in the island, amounting to nearly 12,000 men. The king refused to see him, retiring to a castle at a distance from Palermo under the pretence of illness. The British general insisted on an interview with the queen. From her he demanded the cancelling of the illegal edicts—and the release of the barons—these steps he insisted should be followed by her own total withdrawal from all interference in state affairs. Lord William urged these demands by the threat that in case of their refusal the British troops should leave the island, and the British subsidy be withheld.

Before resorting to extreme measures Lord William

tried the effect of his threat of abandoning Sicily. The British arms were already taken down from the palace of the embassy. So far from being alarmed at the withdrawal of British protection, the approaching departure of the English troops appeared to give extreme satisfaction to the court. Bentinck, convinced by this of their utter faithlessness, determined to enforce submission. He waited on the hereditary prince and told him in plain language that unless his demands were at once complied with, his soldiers would march upon the palace—the king and queen would both be placed on board a frigate and sent prisoners to England. The crown would be conferred upon the prince if he were true to the English alliance, and would consent to govern the country upon constitutional principles. “If not,” continued Lord William, “you too must go on board the English frigate, and your infant son with a regency of my appointment shall be proclaimed king.”²²

Caroline at first determined on resisting by force. Her advisers pointed out to her the futility of such an attempt. The court were compelled to submit to the humiliation. Under the excuse of illness the king resigned the government, for which he had so incontestably proved himself unfit. The hereditary prince, who had joined the Duke of Orleans in his protest against the recent measures, was appointed to govern as Vicar-General, with full regal power, in his name. The illegal edicts

²² The fact of this coercion is mentioned both by Palmieri and Botta. Lord Castlereagh assured the House of Commons, 14th February, 1812, that the appointment of the Vicar-General was the king's voluntary act.—*Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*.

were revoked, the ministers who had counselled them were dismissed. The barons were released from prison ; one of them, the Prince Belmonte, was placed at the head of a new administration. Never was revolution more complete. Lord William Bentinck sternly refused the last request of the queen to place the Duke of Orleans at the head of the Sicilian troops. He himself was appointed generalissimo of the Sicilian army.

The installation of a liberal ministry was followed by a measure which has frequently been described as the granting of the English constitution to Sicily ; but which was really little more than the assertion and definition of privileges which had been the right of the Sicilians from the earliest times. It was unfortunate for the liberties of Sicily that the changes which were made gave occasion to its enemies to represent the parliamentary constitution as the modern creation of English influence in the year 1812.

It is most probable that had the Sicilians been in a position in which the nation could have been left to itself, the arbitrary acts of the sovereign in levying money without the consent of parliament, and in arresting the members who protested against it, would have been followed by a contest with royal prerogative resembling that which acts exactly similar provoked in England in the days of Charles I. The resistance to these illegal acts we may perhaps believe would have led to the establishment of Sicilian freedom by arrangements like those which secured that of England in the revolution of 1688. In 1811 the presence of the British troops protected the court against any insurrection.

of the people. In the settlement of the constitution in 1812, Lord William Bentinck obtained nothing more for the Sicilian people than those securities, which would have been the natural result of the struggle which the illegal acts of Ferdinand provoked. Unhappily that settlement only existed long enough to prove how vain are all attempts to secure the freedom of a nation by foreign intervention, or build up popular liberty by any other means than the spirit and the efforts of the people themselves.

The Sicilian parliament met on the 15th of May, 1812. On the 18th of July, the anniversary of the arrest of the barons, they had laid before them a plan for reforming the constitution—proposed by the Abbé Balsamo. It was in fact the adaptation of the English constitution to that already existing in Sicily. It was like the English revolution of 1688, the assertion of ancient popular rights against the usurpation of prerogative. The barons and ecclesiastics having seats in parliament were to form an upper house of peers—the representatives of the vassals and freeholders the house of commons. All laws must receive the assent of both houses and the king, the judges were declared independent and irremovable, except by both houses of parliament; arrests except in accordance with law were strictly prohibited; and while the king was left the absolute power of convening and proroguing parliament, he was obliged by law to assemble it at least once a year. Ministers were declared responsible for all acts of state. The nation formally acknowledged itself bound to provide suitably and liberally for the honour and dignity of the

crown, but the right of parliament to regulate and control all the items of the public expenditure was expressly admitted and declared.²³

The barons then carried out the measure which they had partially attempted in 1810. All feudal privileges were abolished. These provisions were added by the barons themselves, who relinquished manorial dues and other burdens arising from their feudal claims. In assenting to these remissions some of the barons surrendered an income of three or four thousand a year.

In the month of August the royal assent was given by the Vicar-General to the most important of the proposed changes ; but in the settlement of the details so many obstacles were interposed by the devices of the queen, that in January 1813, the constitution was still unratified by the royal sanction. Lord Castlereagh on that date addressed a despatch to Lord William Bentinck, in which he expressed in strong terms the displeasure of the Prince Regent at the delay.

“ The conduct of the queen,” he said, “ continues to be a subject of equal anxiety and alarm. Her majesty, notwithstanding her solemn assurances to the contrary, still perseveres in embarrassing the councils of the government. Her determination to obstruct, and if possible to overthrow, the existing system of government, as subversive of her own immediate power, is notorious. For this purpose it appears there is no extremity to which she is not prepared to push her hostility to the British alliance, regarding it as the main agent to the accomplishment of her own ambitious

²³ See note A at the end of this volume.

designs, in prosecution of which every expedient of internal intrigue has been resorted to, and even treasonable intercourse with the enemy has been employed to forward her purpose.”²⁴

This energetic dispatch, after referring to the proofs which Lord William Bentinck had been able to collect of the treasonable intercourse between the queen and the enemy, to the undoubted information which from other sources had reached the English government of a conspiracy, to which foreign courts were parties, to effect the conquest of the island by means of an internal faction—expressed the desire of the Prince Regent that the queen should be prevailed on to abstain from interference by the means best calculated to accord with her own feelings and her personal dignity ; but at the same time Lord William Bentinck was commanded to consider himself fully authorised to employ the powers which had been confided to him, to protect the island against the danger which menaced it through her majesty’s influence.

And, finally, he was desired to represent to the Vicar-General the absolute necessity of the queen’s retirement from the island, until all its affairs were finally settled.

The assent of the Vicar-General was formally given to the new constitutional statutes. The confirmation of the king was obtained under his own hand. The ministry proved their sincerity and zeal in the English alliance, by sending seven thousand Sicilian troops to Spain, and as the last triumph of the constitutional

²⁴ Despatch of Lord Castlereagh, January 13, 1813.—*Annals of the Revolution*.

party the queen retired to the castle of Castelveterano, about sixty miles from Palermo ; from which it was understood, that in the spring she was to repair on a visit to her royal relations at Vienna.

The English government in every possible way gave its moral sanction to the measure that had been adopted. Lord Castlereagh, by the express desire of the Prince Regent, addressed a letter to the Prince Belmonte, in which he assured him of his royal highness's entire approbation of the conduct he had pursued, conduct by which the Prince Regent trusted the alliance between England and Sicily had been consolidated for the mutual good of both.

Before finally yielding, the queen had made one last and desperate effort to retrieve her power. In January, 1813, she unexpectedly presented herself at Palermo, and Ferdinand, summoning the ministers, announced to them, that having recovered his health, he had resumed in his own person the exercise of the royal functions. A solemn thanksgiving was actually chaunted in the cathedral for the recovery of the king, and everything was arranged for the issuing of an ordinance, by which the constitution was to be annulled.

Lord William Bentinck was not slow in making his preparations. Once more the British troops were gathered into Palermo. The guns of the British artillery moved rapidly through the streets. The king was told that the commander-in-chief was determined to maintain the government by military force. Ferdinand burst into a vehement rage and told his prime minister Prince Belmonte that he would effect a counter-revolution

in spite of him, and that the prince should be its first victim. Lord William Bentinck once more pointed to the British frigate in the bay. The king was compelled to yield, and Ferdinand issued an ordinance, in which his subjects were informed that even his short return to the cares of business had again affected his health and that illness again obliged him to delegate his power to the Vicar-General.

This daring attempt at a counter-revolution compelled Lord William Bentinck to put in force the powers with which he was armed. The queen was now openly accused of having been a party to placing in the senate-house a bottle, charged with explosive materials, which certainly had been concealed in the embrasures of one of the windows, but had fortunately burst without doing harm.²⁵ More horrible accusations were every where credited of her having attempted to poison the hereditary prince, whom she bitterly reproached with being the slave of her English enemies. In the feeling excited against her, by charges like these—the minor ones of treasonable correspondence with the French were almost forgotten. Still it was universally believed that she had entered into a plot to betray the island to the French. Every where it was reported, and not altogether without foundation, that letters had been seized by the English in Spain, which established, on her part, a treasonable correspondence with Napoleon. Without much regret or pity from any of the people, Caroline was compelled to leave Sicily. She was fated never to return to it again. Her first destination was one of the Ionian

²⁵ Botta.

Islands ; whence immediately before the assembling of the congress, she proceeded to Vienna, where she died.

Lord William Bentinck, believing the affairs of Sicily finally settled, left it for the purpose of commanding a portion of his army, which landed in the south of Spain, to support the movements of the Duke of Wellington.

In his absence the direction of the Sicilian embassy was entrusted to Lord Montgomerie. Bentinck had not long left the island when he found it necessary to return to Palermo to save the constitution from destruction. He landed in Spain with the Sicilian contingent in June. On the 31st of August he wrote to Lord Castlereagh from Tarragona, stating that he was compelled by the accounts he had received from Lord Montgomerie of the state of affairs in Sicily, to relinquish the command in Spain, and return to the island. In this letter he made an earnest request to be relieved of his political charge, and appointed to a purely military command. "I am now convinced," he observed, "that such is the weakness of the hereditary prince, and such will be the incapacity of any set of men that may be placed at the head of the government ; such, also, the silly, the interested, the depraved character of the people, it will be impossible for the British political authority ever to absent himself from Sicily."²⁶

The ministry he had formed had before his return been broken up. Internal dissensions had been the cause of their fall. Castelnovo had been anxious to carry a law for the total abolition of entails. Belmonte

²⁶ Lord William Bentinck to Lord Castlereagh, from Tarragona, August, 1813.—*Castlereagh Papers*, vol. i., 3rd series, p. 44.

and the rest of the ministers opposed it. The dispute led to a personal hatred between these two chiefs of the constitutional party. Many of their supporters, especially in the upper house, were alienated by the proposal of Castelnovo. The dissensions of the ministers led to divisions among their followers. The disunited and weakened ranks of the constitutionalists had to meet an unnatural, but not therefore less formidable alliance, between the royalists and the violent democrats, many of whom had obtained seats in the new parliament. The result of the combination was, that the ministers were unable to obtain from parliament the necessary supplies which under one pretence or other were postponed. It was believed that French intrigue and French gold were actively employed, and an apparently petty tumult which occurred in Palermo about the middle of July, was regarded as the result of an organised plot to overthrow the constitution and reinstate the king.

Ministers prorogued parliament for a week. A military commission was issued to try the rioters, and Palermo was virtually placed under martial law. On the re-assembling of parliament the attacks upon ministers for this conduct were so violent that they resigned. A ministry composed of the most determined of the royal partisans was appointed in their stead. It was resolved at once to carry an address in both houses, inviting the king to resume the exercise of his authority. This was prevented by the firmness of Lord Montgomerie, who declared to the hereditary prince his determination to prevent by military force even the making of such a proposal.

These proceedings were not very well calculated to uphold the authority of the constitution. Lord William Bentinck reached Palermo in October. Immediately on his landing, he issued a proclamation, in which he stated that having engaged to the king to preserve tranquillity until the work begun in the parliament of 1812 should be completed, he was prepared to fulfil that pledge by the employment of the force under his command, and to punish summarily all who ventured to disturb the public peace.²⁷

Overawing the disaffected by this threat of military force, he summoned to his house the members of the constitutional party. He insisted on a reconciliation of their differences. Having accomplished this, he induced the prince-vicar to dismiss his new ministers and recall his former advisers, and finally he advised him to dissolve the parliament.

Lord William Bentinck did not hesitate to use every means in his power to influence the new elections, upon the result of which he believed the preservation of the fabric of Sicilian freedom to depend. In the depth of a winter unusually severe in Sicily, as throughout Europe, he traversed the island upon a tour, supposed to be one of pleasure. Everywhere he was received with enthusiasm. Everywhere he made his presence the occasion of a political lesson. He appealed to the people not to allow the opportunity of securing national freedom to pass from their hands, and at some of the festivals given in his honour, he openly expressed the hope that they would not send to the new parliament

²⁷ Palmieri, "Constitutional History of Sicily," p. 215.

the same class of men as those whom they had returned to the last.

The result was a triumph to that which might now be considered as the British cause. In the new parliament the constitutional party constituted an overwhelming majority. Possibly, had Lord William Bentinck then acted on the views he had expressed to Lord Castlereagh, and remained at his post, Sicilian liberty might have been firmly established ; but once more the passion for military glory placed him at the head of his troops ; once more his absence inflicted an injury, upon this occasion an irreparable one, upon the cause which he had created with so much pains. In the beginning of 1814, he left Palermo at the head of a body of English and Sicilian troops. His landing at Leghorn, and his expedition against Genoa, have been already described. Scarcely had he sailed from Sicily when a plan was formed for undoing all that he had accomplished in the recent elections.

The prince-vicar opened the session in a speech which was everything the most ardent patriot could wish. He repeated his pledge to maintain the constitution, congratulated the people upon the establishment of their liberties, and pointed to the example of England, all whose greatness and glory he attributed to her possession of institutions like those which had now been established in Sicily.

In the struggles which attended the elections there was no doubt that irregularities had occurred, and returns been obtained by violence and illegality. On these grounds a motion was made in the house

of Peers for an address to the prince-bishop to dissolve the parliament, and before the lower house had time to interpose in defence of its privileges, the design was carried into execution and the dissolution actually took place.

When Lord William Bentinck returned from Genoa the object of England in maintaining the struggle in Sicily was past. With the fall of Napoleon's power the great importance of the island as the centre of military operations was at an end ; the military occupation of the British was to cease, and with it passed away the only grounds upon which the course of violent interference that had been adopted could be sustained. The patriots of Sicily had not the same object in opposing the return of the king to power as they had when they apprehended the subversion of their liberties by a plot supported by France ; and when Belmonte, among others, declared his wish to restore the regal authority, Lord William Bentinck was no longer able to resist, and in 1814 Ferdinand resumed the exercise of the royal authority with the full consent of the ministers of England.

The fears of the friends of Sicilian independence now turned in another direction. England was believed to meditate the design of seizing on the island for herself. Bentinck had unquestionably given grounds for the suspicion. The project of placing Sicily under English sovereignty was one of which he had at least contemplated the possibility. From the result of his own observation he had formed a decided opinion—one entertained years before by Sir John Moore, that Sicily could never enjoy security either for her happiness or her freedom,

except under English protection,²⁸ and he had suggested to his own government the plan of annexing the island to the British crown; he went even the length of sounding the Duke of Calabria as to the possibility of purchasing, by territorial compensation in other quarters, a consent to such an arrangement on the part of the reigning family—an act of boldness or indiscretion which drew upon him a reprimand from Lord Castlereagh with directions to convey to the Sicilian government the unequivocal disclaimer on the part of the British ministry of any such design.²⁹

Lord William had the mortification of seeing the return of the king to power, followed by the restoration of a reactionist ministry—the reversal of his own policy—and the exclusion of his friends from all office and favour. No direct attack was made upon the constitution, but the underlings and runners of the court—those who represent the passions and the prejudices of their masters—made no secret of their expectation of its approaching downfall. Lord William Bentinck had no longer any power to interfere. Sent for by the king on his resumption of his authority, he was asked by Ferdinand if he desired to make any communication. The ambassador who once had haughtily dictated his terms, could only reply by requesting that his majesty would honour him by coming to the British embassy to witness the display of fireworks upon the festival of St. Rosalia.³⁰

²⁸ The unguarded expression of this opinion was one of the reasons of Sir John Moore's removal from the Sicilian command.—*Castlereagh Papers*, vol. vii.

²⁹ Letter of Lord Castlereagh.—*Castlereagh Papers*.

³⁰ Lord Valentia mentions, in his journal, that the British embassy com-

The king opened the session of the new parliament on the 18th of July (A.D. 1814). Two days previously Lord William Bentinck finally bade farewell to the island where he had laboured so earnestly for the freedom of its people. About the same period the Duke of Orleans returned to France, and Belmonte, in bad health, accompanied him to Paris, where he died.

The three years during which Lord William Bentinck represented the English government in Sicily, were eventful ones for this island. No mean judge of men has described him from personal knowledge as "one of the most able, most enlightened, and most virtuous men, that ever were employed in high public trusts."³¹ His conduct in Sicily appears to have been influenced only by an earnest desire to give to the Sicilians the blessings of freedom, and to secure to them those liberties which their ancient constitution in theory at least conferred on them. The constitution of 1812 was in fact nothing more than the restoration of those liberties, with such guarantees as could be drawn from the example of the country which in its early institutions most nearly resembled their own. In his earlier efforts he was cordially supported by the Marquis Wellesley, who then held the seals of the English foreign office. If Sicily failed in maintaining that free constitution, the fault certainly does not rest either with the foreign minister of England, or with the nobleman

manding a good view of the pyrotechnic display, it was usual for the Court to visit it on that evening.

³¹ Lord Brougham's "Political Philosophy," part 1, p. 621.

whose name is identified with the freedom of the island. The Marquis Wellesley gave to the cause of Sicilian liberty a generous and an enlightened support, and in arming Lord William Bentinck with all the power that might be necessary to protect the Sicilian people against the attempted despotism of the court, he acted the part worthy of the minister of a nation which had asserted its own liberties in a struggle not very unlike that in which the Sicilians were engaged. The ordinances of Ferdinand imposing taxation without the consent of parliament, were a violation of the Sicilian constitution as those of Charles I. were of the English. There was something singular in the closeness with which Ferdinand copied his English exemplar, even in the number of his arrests. The arrest of the five barons in Sicily was an incident closely resembling that of the five members by the English king.

The support of the British government to Lord William Bentinck did not cease with the removal of Lord Wellesley from office. Success crowned his efforts. The reformed constitution of Sicily was established, and in January 1813, Lord Castlereagh almost overstepped the ordinary limits of diplomatic communication in conveying to the Prince of Belmonte the expressions of the approval of the English court. "I fulfil," he wrote to the Sicilian minister for foreign affairs,—“ I fulfil with the highest satisfaction, the commands of the Prince Regent, by transmitting to your excellency the sentiments which animate his royal highness on this occasion. Both the British public and government equally understand the truly wise and

patriotic part which your excellency has taken in the negotiations which have taken place between the minister and commander of the forces of his Britannic Majesty and the Sicilian government, and there is no doubt here that by persevering in the same conduct, the alliance between the two countries will be for ever fixed upon such a basis that neither intrigues nor force will be able to shake it.”³²

When Lord William Bentinck departed from the island, he left Sicily in possession of a constitution established upon the firmest basis of law. By the laws of the island no power except that of the parliament itself could interfere with it. The sovereign had no more right to alter it than the sovereign of England has to change the laws of the English nation. Against any attempt from external violence the faith of England was pledged to the Sicilian people.

On resuming his royal authority, the king to all appearance cordially and sincerely acquiesced in the securities which that constitution afforded to the liberties of his subjects. On proceeding to open the session of parliament he took in the presence of the assembled peers and commoners, the solemn oath to observe the constitution. In his opening speech he expressed his cordial approbation of all that had been done by the prince vicar, declared his admiration for the constitution which his people had been happy in obtaining, and earnestly exhorted his parliament to strengthen and defend it. It was impossible for the forms of language to express a more earnest or apparently a more sincere

³² Palmieri, p. 160.

attachment to the cause of the freedom and national independence of Sicily :—

“ Illustrious Peers, Honourable Representatives of the Commons of the Kingdom,

“ Amongst the thousand thoughts awakened by this memorable day, I prefer communicating those which most rejoice my heart. I come in the midst of you, as a father in the bosom of his affectionate family. I have but one sole object,—the welfare, felicity and greatness of the Sicilian nation.

“ Providence, before whom the imaginations of men are but vain and insignificant, has guided the great events of Europe by ways the most extraordinary and unexpected. Sicily herself is now on the verge of being able to recover all her ancient splendour. Abroad she has reassumed her rank among the hierarchy of nations, because the enormous mass which stifled independence and political liberty has been destroyed. At home, the wishes and efforts for a useful and salutary reform has seconded the spirit and general impulse of the age towards perfection. I was not ignorant of the wisdom of your ancient laws. I could appreciate the institutions and regulations which reflect so much honour upon your parliaments, and upon the illustrious princes who were the founders and restorers of this monarchy. But I was convinced that no human work is lasting ; that time by changing the relations of things, renders the best systems susceptible of correction ; and that political, like civil laws, continually require to be brought back to the purity of their first principles, and cleared from the abuses which oftentimes disfigure them and render them abortive.

“ Sicily has now a written constitution : that constitution having for object the establishment of a certain order in the various modes of exercising power, with a view to prevent their being confounded with each other ; the assigning a limit to the different functions of that power, so that one might not encroach upon the other ; the fixing the grand focus in which private rights and public necessities should harmoniously concentrate themselves ; the protecting the civil liberty of individuals, and the full security of persons and property ; in short, that constitution having for its object the laying foundations for the prosperity and welfare of

Sicilians, has been regarded by me with feelings of the tenderest affection, and has taken for its model the form of the government of a great and enlightened nation which commands the admiration of the world, and which has given, and is still continually giving, astonishing proofs of riches, power, and magnanimity.

“It is true that these great benefits have not entirely answered the expectations formed of them. The consequences of a general war, the fear of a contagion which threatened our shores, the convulsions which usually accompany great changes and sudden and unprepared transitions, and the destruction of ancient habits and customs, have perhaps occasioned some irritation, and (I must confess it) some dissensions. But on this solemn day we are at length united together, in order to enjoy and increase the good we possess, and to obliterate the recollection of every ill. Sons and brothers of the same family, actuated by the same interests, and influenced by the same love of glory, you will have but one mind, but one will. As becomes the descendants of Henry IV., the only ardent desire of my breast shall be the true felicity of my people, and in that, and for that alone, will I employ all the moments of my existence, and all the powers and prerogatives which the constitution secures to my crown.

“Direct your attention, therefore, to the objects for which you have been called together. May concord, unanimity, justice, humanity, honour, and patriotism preside among you, diffuse themselves into your discussions, and enlighten your resolves.

“Let your first and most special care be, to support the dignity of the nation. The balance of power, and the free use of those relations which are the right of every nation, being restored, Sicily will have her own proper existence, and will enjoy her political independence. Be justly proud of this sacred privilege; but be careful to support it with all your powers, so long as it wants strength, and so long as our political horizon is not entirely cleared of those clouds which might, at any hour, produce the storm and the tempest. Be upon your defence, and render the first moments of your independence secure by the presence of an armed force which shall make you respected. Consider that these temporary sacrifices will perhaps save you from the humiliation of falling into contempt and insignificance, and that you will be indebted to them for the consolation of soon perceiving that your political existence will be much more durable, and much less costly.

“Complete, therefore, what is still wanting in the civil edifice which you have raised. The legislative code, and the defining of the functions of the magistrates, are the noblest and most necessary portions of it. Your lives, your persons, your property, will be insecure, if justice do not appear open and undisguised. That heavenly virtue will reject the petition of those who invoke her in an unrighteous cause, and who wish to make her the instrument of iniquity, or the torch of discord.

“Retouch and correct such imperfections as may be met with in the execution of your work. The productions of men are defective from their very origin. Avail yourself of the experience of past ages; consult the prudent provisions of prevailing laws: assimilate, as much as possible, ancient usages with modern ones; adapt the modes of thinking, of feeling, and of living, of the inhabitants of this happy soil, to the times and to the progress of intelligence and civilisation; and do not forget to consider, in every point of view and in all its relations, the present state of industry and commerce, as well as that which they may hereafter attain.”³³

In spite of all these glowing protestations, even then the design was formed of getting rid of that popular constitution which could never be cordially accepted by a court long trained in the principles of a despotic government. Unhappily events occurred to favour that design.

The new representative of England at the court of Palermo was Mr., afterwards Sir William, A’Court.³⁴ He regarded the attempt to give to the island representative institutions as a failure. His views on Sicilian politics were directly the reverse of those of his predecessor, and he was able entirely to impress them upon the cabinet at home. In Sicily itself the new ambas-

³³ “Sicily and England,” Ridgeway, 1848.

³⁴ He was subsequently elevated to the peerage as Lord Heytesbury, and was Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland in 1845.

sador was regarded as the partisan of the court, and the friends of popular institutions, in contrasting his conduct with that of his predecessor, could not help applying to them a designation drawn from the history of their early Norman sovereigns, which recorded the reigns of William the Bad and William the Good. Such are the names by which William A'Court and William Bentinck are still known.³⁵

The Sicilian parliament held its sessions both in 1814 and 1815. In neither year was their conduct marked by those qualities which in elevating the character, might still have secured the permanence of representative institutions. The violence of the democratic party was now turned upon the royalists, with whom they had been but recently allied. Personal altercations disgraced, and personal violence, upon some occasions it is said, interrupted their debates.³⁶ The character and influence of parliamentary government suffered in these scandals. Many of the warmest friends of liberty desired a modification of the constitution, and the king took advantage of this feeling to place in the hands of Mr. A'Court a plan, not for modifying, but for virtually abrogating the constitution. By some unfortunate mistake the paper of the king was transmitted to London, as if it had obtained the sanction of the leading members of the parliament.

Rumours were rife in the island that England had

³⁵ Palmieri.

³⁶ Lord Brougham's *Political Philosophy*, vol. i. chap. xvii. ; *Hughes' Travels*, vol. i. p. 16. The passage from the latter, quoted by Lord Brougham, is plainly intended as a caricature of scenes that did occur, but not exactly with the accompaniments mentioned in the graphic description of the writer.

become a party to the destruction of the constitution.³⁷ The old story was renewed that she contemplated the seizure of Sicily for herself. On the 20th of October Mr. A'Court communicated to the Sicilian government an official memorandum which was circulated through the entire island, announcing the withdrawal of England from active interference in Sicilian affairs ; but at the same time declaring that "in the event of any prudent and temperate modification of the government, England would willingly lend that aid and support which it might be in her power to afford ;" adding, however, this condition, "She exacts only as a condition of her assistance, that this modification be undertaken by the parliament itself, and accomplished in a legal and constitutional manner, as far removed from any direct intervention of overweening authority on the one hand, as from any undue exertion of popular interference on the other."³⁸ The

³⁷ It was circulated in the island, and generally believed, that King George III., then in confinement at Windsor Castle, "the blind old man whom God had smitten," had written to Ferdinand, desiring him to resume his authority, and to govern his subjects despotically, and that he should have King George's support. Such was Sicilian knowledge of the events that were passing in other countries.

³⁸ "Sicily and England : a Sketch of Events in Sicily ;" Ridgeway, 1849. Very great complaints were made of the withholding, by Lord Castlereagh, of this despatch from Parliament at the time of the discussion on Lord William Bentinck's motion on the affairs of Sicily, June, 1821.

In this valuable pamphlet the memorandum of Mr. A'Court is printed in full, and the importance of the document will justify its transcription here.

MEMORANDUM OF MR. A'COURT.

"The fortunate events which have lately taken place in Europe, having materially altered the relative position in which Great Britain is placed with respect to Sicily, it becomes necessary for her representative to make known to the Sicilian nation the sentiments by which the British government is actuated, and the views to which its attention is principally directed at the

publication of this manifesto had the effect of assuring the minds of the Sicilians, who still regarded England as the protector of their liberties and rights.

present moment. This is the more necessary, because, in the conflict of parties, the right of interference has, perhaps, been as much exaggerated on one side, as it has been unnecessarily and unwisely denied on the other. The sacrifices which Great Britain has made for the safety and prosperity of this Island, entitle her to expect that her suggestions should be received with respect and attention; whilst the moderation with which she is disposed to exercise the privilege, which the benefits she has conferred have given her, ought to be considered as a sufficient proof that she is little disposed to aim at the acquirement of any undue influence, inconsistent with the principles of the constitution, or with the dignity of an independent State.

"It is necessary to go back to the causes which led to the general expression of the national desire for a reform in the constitution of the country; causes which may be found in the progressive advancement of civilisation; in the more general diffusion of knowledge, and in the inadequacy of all human institutions to resist the abuses and deterioration to which they are necessarily subject, and to afford, amidst the change of opinions and circumstances, the same security for the happiness of the people, which they might perhaps have possessed at the time of their original formation.

"But although the wish for a change was almost unanimous, the definition of the precise limits which ought to be given to the proposed alterations was attended with considerable difficulty. In this emergency it was not unnatural that the nation should turn its eyes towards a country which, possessing an extent and population comparatively small and unimportant, was not only herself affording a successful opposition to the torrent which had overwhelmed the most powerful monarchies of Europe, but was extending the hand of succour to those who were oppressed or menaced in every part of the world.

"To the wise and excellent institutions of that country it was supposed, and very justly supposed, that its splendour and prosperity were to be attributed; and a hope was entertained, that by the adoption of a similar form of government the same advantages might be secured to Sicily, whose insular position and early institutions offered a certain degree of resemblance to those of its more powerful ally.

"England could not be insensible to the appeal which was made to her; and whilst she charged herself with the protection of Sicily from any foreign invader, she at the same time lent herself to the invitation she had received, and became the protectress and the supporter of alterations, founded upon principles so just in themselves, and so creditable to those from whom they had originally emanated.

"Under such auspices the work of the Constitution was begun. If in its progress it has met with difficulties which could not be foreseen; if it has encountered obstacles, which may still appear to be insurmountable; the magnitude of the undertaking should be considered; the comparative ease,

The parliament assembled in 1815. Before leaving Sicily, Ferdinand once more dissolved it. In the May of that year he resumed the throne of Naples. No

with which some very important changes have already been effected, recollected ; and above all, that tone of despondency and discouragement should be resisted, which leads to the condemnation of every attempt at amelioration as a vain and visionary project.

“ It is difficult, it may almost be said to be impossible, to transfer from one country to another, without any previous preparation, the whole of its laws, forms, and institutions. The difference of manners, prejudices, religions, and education, offers an insurmountable barrier to the accomplishment of so total a revolution. Great Britain never wished to impose this condition upon Sicily. As the friend and the ally of the Sicilian Nation, she wished to favour the adoption of such parts only of her constitution, as after grave and deliberate examination, should be found in consonance with the wishes of the people, and calculated to insure their prosperity and happiness.

“ In the further deliberations which may precede the completion of the constitution, she is desirous of recommending to the serious consideration of the nation, the necessity of leaving an adequate proportion of power in the hands of the executive government ; and on the other hand, she would hold up to the executive power the example of the King of France, who on his restoration to the throne of his ancestors, has confirmed to the nation the privileges and advantages of a free government, as far as is consistent with the necessary authority of the crown, the maintenance of order and tranquillity amongst the people, and with the habits and character of the French nation.

“ She would further recommend an early attention to the code of laws, and to the arrangements necessary to ensure their due administration. She would call to the recollection of the nation, that the happiness of a people depends more upon a pure and impartial administration of justice, than upon the proportion of political power that may be entrusted to them. The full possession of civil liberty is the only secure foundation upon which political power can be established ; and to the acquirement of this invaluable blessing, she would willingly call that attention which has hitherto been principally directed to objects of lesser importance.

“ In any temperate and prudent modification of the government, England would willingly lend that aid and support which it may be in her power to afford ; she exacts only as a condition of this assistance that it be done by the parliament itself ; that it be accomplished in a legal and constitutional manner, as far removed from any direct intervention of overbearing authority on the one hand, as from any undue exertion of popular interference on the other. She tenders this advice and this assistance in no other light than as the most intimate friend and ally of his Sicilian majesty. The offer which was lately made of withdrawing her troops from Sicily, would be a sufficient proof (if indeed any proof were wanting) that England has not the remotest

less than three proclamations assured his Neapolitan subjects of the blessings he intended to bestow upon them by his mild and paternal rule. Each rose above the other in expressions of liberality and good will. In the last, which was dated from Messina, just on the

wish to exercise a military influence over the councils of the king or of the nation. The attitude which she was obliged to assume during the war, may have given rise to the propagation of a variety of erroneous reports, the best refutation of which is to be found in the well-known loyalty of her conduct, and in her acknowledged good faith.

“The continued prevalence of party spirit in Sicily cannot sufficiently be lamented. The views of Great Britain being solely directed to the general prosperity of the island, there can be nothing more remote from the intentions of her government than that the British minister at Palermo should appear as the centre of a party. But in making this declaration, it may not be unnecessary to add, that the British government considers itself as deeply interested in the fate of those individuals who have supported the measures of internal policy in Sicily, which the critical situation of the country during the last three years compelled its representative to recommend. The upright and honourable intentions by which these individuals were actuated, are perfectly well known, and their abandonment under such circumstances would be inconsistent with the character and dignity of the British nation. It has an undoubted right to insist that no person shall suffer, either in his person or property, for the part he may have taken in the establishment and support of the constitution; and the perfect security of these individuals must be considered as the *sine quâ non* of the continuance of British protection and alliance.

“The different position in which the two countries are necessarily placed by the conclusion of a general peace, has drawn from the representative of Great Britain this general declaration of the views and sentiments of his government. The interference of Great Britain in the domestic policy of Sicily, has never sprung but from the purest motives of disinterested friendship. She will be amply compensated for all the sacrifices he shas made, if it be eventually found that her exertions have contributed to the welfare, happiness, and prosperity of the Sicilian nation.

“WILLIAM A'COURT.

“*Palermo, October 20th, 1814.*”

Without anticipating the history of future years, the reader may perhaps be here reminded that the Sicilian constitution was destroyed, not “by the parliament itself,” not “in a legal and constitutional manner,” but by an edict, dated in 1816, founded solely on the royal authority, and claiming also the sanction of the Congress of Vienna, upon the absurd ground that Ferdinand had been recognised as King of the two Sicilies. This edict had not even the

eve of his embarkation, he promised a constitution to Naples in which the law should be supreme, and the king only the instrument of executing the will of a united people.

pretence of legal authority to support it. In the absence of a parliament there has not been since 1816 any legal government in Sicily.

In a despatch to Mr. A'Court from Lord Castlereagh, dated the 6th of September, 1816, the British minister laid down the following rule as guiding the conduct of England in reference to proposed changes in the Sicilian constitution. Disclaiming generally the right of interference, Lord Castlereagh proceeded to point out that the Prince Regent would consider such interference imposed on him as a duty, in two cases:—

1st. If any unkindness or persecution were adopted to those who had acted with the British government.

“His Royal Highness would feel himself equally compelled, however reluctantly, to interfere, if he had the mortification to observe any attempt made to reduce the privileges of the Sicilian nation, in such a degree as might expose the British Government to the reproach of having contributed to a change of system in Sicily, which had, in the end, impaired the freedom and happiness of its inhabitants, as compared with what they formerly enjoyed.”

The change, which was a few months afterwards enforced by the edict of the king, unquestionably fell within the latter of these conditions. It abrogated not only the reforms of 1812, but also the ancient constitution which had preserved parliamentary institutions from the earliest times; it destroyed that national independence which, under every change of dynasty, had been preserved, and it left England justly exposed to the reproach of having contributed to a change of system in Sicily which had, in the end, impaired the freedom and happiness of its inhabitants as compared with what they formerly enjoyed.

After his departure from Sicily, Ferdinand never convened the parliament, but its legal existence never was destroyed. The edict of 1816, by the mere usurpation of power, established despotism in the place of government by representative institutions.

NOTE ON THE SICILIAN CONSTITUTION OF 1812.

THE following sketch from a recent publication,¹ contains a clear and correct account of the arrangements adopted in 1812.

“The Parliament of Sicily, like that of England, was composed of two Chambers; Chamber of Peers and Chamber of Commons.

“The Chamber of Peers was composed of the Sicilian barons and prelates who had formed a part of the ancient Parliament. The king could create new peers among the Sicilian nobles enjoying an income of 6000 ounces, that is 78,000 livres. The parliamentary dignities were perpetual, hereditary, and inalienable. The quality of ecclesiastical peer was transmitted from titular to titular. If new bishoprics were created in the kingdom, the new bishops and their successors were ecclesiastical peers in full right. All the peers were equal in right, and hereditary counsellors of the crown. They took their seats in the chamber according to the seniority of their peerage. They could not deliberate with a smaller number than thirty. The peers, their wives, their widows, so long as they did not contract a new marriage, and the heirs to the peerage were judged, in criminal matters, by the Chamber of Peers. The president of the Chamber of Peers was chosen by the king for each parliament from the members of the chamber.

“The Chamber of Commons was composed of the representatives of the people of the realm. The representatives were elected for four years, counting from the day of their convocation. At the expiration of this term their powers ceased altogether. The representatives received no pay.² The kingdom of Sicily was divided

¹ “Naples, 1130—1857.” Par Charles Paya.

² There was an exception to this general rule with regard to the representatives of the universities. They might receive pay, but out of the funds of the establishment, and in virtue of a deliberation of the university body,

into twenty-three districts, and each district nominated two representatives. The town of Palermo nominated six; the towns of Messina and Catania each three. The island of Lipari nominated one; the university of Palermo two; that of Catania one. Every town or commune of eighteen thousand inhabitants and upwards nominated two. Every town or commune of from ten to eighteen thousand inhabitants, one. The classification of the parliamentary towns and communes could only be changed by a new census approved by the parliament. With very few exceptions there was incompatibility between the quality of a representative and an office payed by the state. To be named a representative it was necessary, first, to be a Sicilian; second, to have passed the age of twenty; third, to possess in Sicily a net income for life of 300 ounces, or 3900 livres, for a district representative; of 500 ounces, or 6500 livres, for a representative of the town of Palermo; of 150 ounces, or 1950 livres, for a representative of any other parliamentary town or commune. A representative of the university required the same income, unless he was a professor in the university, in which case no condition of income was imposed. To be an elector it was necessary to be a Sicilian, twenty years of age, to possess an income which varied according to the locality and the condition of the person from 117 to 650 livres, or to occupy a public situation for life, producing for some, 650 livres, for others, 1300 livres.

“ The formation of lists, the taking of the votes, and the process of scrutiny, have often, and in all places, given rise to revolting iniquities. * * * The Sicilian constitution took minute precautions to escape such misfortunes.

“ The commission of scrutiny was not called upon to examine whether the candidates possessed the required qualifications. This office belonged to the prothonotary of the kingdom, and the parties interested might appeal against his decisions to the Chamber of Commons, which decided definitively. In the same way they could appeal to the Chamber of Commons upon any difficulties which might arise in the course of the elections.

“ No peer of the realm could take part in the election of members of the Chamber of Commons. The legislature feared that the

which was submitted to the approbation of the civic council. The payment could not exceed one ounce, or thirteen livres daily.

influence too often acquired by great fortunes and great names, should succeed in falsifying in its principle, the true character of the second chamber. No official of the king, no dependant of the crown, could interfere in the elections under penalty of a fine of 200 ounces, or 2600 livres, with the loss of his situation. The care which in this latter instance they had taken to give a sanction to the prohibition showed that they feared still more the disastrous effect of interference.

“ The candidate could not promise money to the electors, or offer them any present whatever. They could not invite them either to a banquet or a fête under penalty of a fine of 200 ounces, or 2400 livres and a void election. It was above all against certain functionaries of the government whose candidature was possible, that the article was directed, but high moral feeling should have rendered it general. The man who possesses no fortune but his own merit, is often thrust aside by the rich and ignorant one. They did not wish wealth to occupy the position due only to talent.

“ But what the legislature most anxiously endeavoured to secure was freedom of suffrage. No corps or detachment of troops could remain in towns when elections were being held. If the place of voting was a garrison town, the soldiers were obliged to remove to a distance of at least two miles, two days before the election commenced, and not to return until two days after it was over; in this way, all violence of power became impossible, and the citizens could exercise their rights in security.

“ Let us now suppose the two chambers nominated, and see what were their functions. The parliament made, interpreted, modified, and repealed the laws. The king's duty was to promulgate them. He granted or refused his sanction; but could not modify the laws. The parliament must be convoked every year. If the king opened the session in person, he went to the Chamber of Peers, and pronounced, or caused to be read, a speech. If the king dissolved parliament, he was obliged immediately to convoke the electoral assemblies, and these latter should elect the deputies of the Chamber of Commons within an interval of forty days. It was declared the duty of parliament during the first session of each reign to seek out carefully any abuses in the execution of the constitutional laws, which might have been introduced during the preceding reign. They were to reform or to urge the reformation of

these errors. The suppression of an old magistracy or the creation of a new one, were considered legislative acts, and could not take place without a warrant from parliament.

“ Every proposition relating to taxes originated in the Chamber of Commons. The Chamber of Peers accepted or rejected the proposition, but could not modify it. No right of precedence existed among the members of the Chamber of Commons. That chamber could not deliberate unless there were at least sixty members present. It elected its president by secret ballot, and the election was only submitted to the approbation of the king. Here, as in the other chamber, every member had a right to make a motion.

“ If a representative accepted any of the offices which made him ineligible, he ceased, ipso facto, by law to be a member of parliament. Both chambers adjourned their sittings, discussions, and deliberations at pleasure. One chamber could not take cognizance of the discussions in the other; a motion rejected by a chamber could not be re-produced until the session of the following year.

“ The king could not take cognizance of the motions debated in the chambers. No judge or magistrate of the kingdom could institute a proceeding at law, pronounce or execute judgment against the members of the two chambers, or against either chamber as a body, for anything that might be said or done in the course of their debates or deliberations. Any person transgressing this was punished by a fine of 1000 ounces, or 13,000 francs, by the loss of his office, and by transportation for ten years, without being permitted to plead even orders or commissions of the king in extenuation of his guilt. The king could not grant pardon of the punishment incurred, nor even mitigate it. Each chamber had the right of arresting all persons who were guilty of contempt towards it. The sittings of the two chambers were public. The parliament had a printing-office within the precincts of its house. The director of this printing-office was subject entirely and immediately to the orders of the presidents of the two chambers.

“ The king was the supreme head of the army and navy. But this formidable instrument, which by force of circumstances is placed in the hands of the executive power, is often dangerous to the liberties of the people. The constitution sought to avert this danger by declaring that the king could neither introduce into or

retain in Sicily any troops without the consent of the parliament. Everything is to be feared from a power which, without right, creates for itself an exorbitant force. The legislature had decreed that the king could not press any Sicilian into the military service, either on land or sea, without the consent of parliament. History abounds in proofs, and Naples shows at present, that foreigners are nearly always a calamity to a nation; the king could not appoint any foreigner to military offices or employment without the express and special authority of parliament. He could not select any but Sicilians for his secretaries of state, members of his privy council, for the ecclesiastical benefices of royal patronage, or as judicial and administrative magistrates. The creation of new and lucrative offices, new corporations, and pensions granted for services rendered to the state, becomes sometimes in corrupt hands a more easy means of oppression; in all these cases the parliament interfered, and nothing could be done without its consent. The right of granting pardons might save great criminals from well merited punishments; the king was prohibited from exercising his prerogative, when the crime was one against the constitution of the realm.

“ In fine, when the new king or queen was acknowledged by the parliament, he (or she) was bound to take in the cathedral of Palermo, and from the hands of the archbishop, this solemn oath:—

“ ‘ I, M. N. king (or queen) of Sicily, I promise and swear
“ ‘ upon the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, and upon the four
“ ‘ gospels, to observe, and make to be observed, the Catholic
“ ‘ Apostolic and Roman religion, to observe and respect, make to
“ ‘ be observed and respected, the constitution of this realm, and
“ ‘ all the laws made, and which shall be made by the parliament
“ ‘ according to the constitutional form. I swear and promise
“ ‘ upon the aforesaid Holy Cross, never to attempt anything
“ ‘ against the laws established by the parliament, or the happi-
“ ‘ ness of my subjects.’

“ The parliament in return swore to maintain the sovereign in all the rights which the constitution granted to him, and an article, which immediately followed, enacted that if the King of Sicily should be re-established in the kingdom of Naples, or if he should acquire any other states, the kingdom of Sicily should remain in entire and absolute independence either of the kingdom of Naples or of any other state. . . . The constitution guaranteed

individual liberty against abuses of every kind. It established trial by jury in criminal matters, and promised it in civil matters. It instituted arbitration. It protected the prisoner, and took particular care of the person arraigned. It founded communal administration, and devoted one entire chapter in twenty-two articles to the rights and duties of the citizens. There were to be found two stipulations, which themselves alone were worth all the others, for the security, the glory, and the greatness of the nation, if they had been respected by the sovereign. First, the citizens could freely publish their opinions by means of the press, without being submitted to any preventive censorship. Secondly, they could speak freely upon any political subject, and complain with equal freedom of any injustice which they thought they suffered. The magistrates were bound to disregard informers of the conversations of the citizens."

NOTE ON EVENTS CONNECTED WITH THE NEAPOLITAN RESTORATION OF 1799.

SOME of the transactions mentioned in the eighth chapter of this volume require, perhaps, a fuller notice than was consistent with the space devoted to them in the text.

The object of this note is:—

1st. To examine the facts relative to the annulling of the capitulation by Lord Nelson.

2nd. To refer more fully to the cruelties practised by the restored Neapolitan government.

I.—CONDUCT OF LORD NELSON.

The part taken by Lord Nelson in the annulling of the capitulation has been the subject of condemnation, which until very recently has been universal. Even now, when for more than fifty years the remains of the great hero have been reposing beneath the dome of St. Paul's, nothing that affects his memory, nothing, above all, that can throw a new light upon that transaction which has been hitherto regarded as a damning blot upon his fame, can be without interest to the British nation.

No one can accuse the historians of that nation of having qualified the language in which they have described his acts at Naples.

Southey, his partial biographer, thus writes:—

“The castles of Uovo and Nuovo were chiefly defended by Neapolitan revolutionists, the powerful men among them having sought shelter there. They were strong places, and if they were taken, the reduction of Fort St. Elmo, which commands Naples, would be greatly expedited. Cardinal Ruffo proposed to the garrison to capitulate, on condition that their persons and properties should be guaranteed. The capitulation was accepted. It

which, though frequently resorted to by the continental powers and sometimes by the French, is unworthy of a generous mind and destitute of any support in the law of nations In every point of view, therefore, the conduct of Nelson in this tragic affair was inexcusable. His biographer may, perhaps with justice ascribe it to the fatal ascendancy of female fascination, but the historian who has the interests of humanity and the cause of justice to support, can admit of no such alleviation, and will best discharge his duty by imitating the conduct of his eloquent annalists, and with shame acknowledging the disgraceful deeds.”⁵

A more recent writer gives still more forcible expression to the judgment in which many have mournfully acquiesced:—

“On his return to Naples, Nelson dishonoured his character, and sullied his glory, by listening to the violent counsels of a woman, whose passionate zeal for her friends overleaped all the boundaries not only of discretion, but of justice. He became her accomplice in perfidy and murder. These seem to be hard terms to use of a man of whom, in other respects, England is so justly proud. But they are the terms used by Lord Holland, and not unwarranted by impartial history.”⁶

⁵ Alison, vol. vi. p. 390.

⁶ Rev. G. Vernon Harcourt, preface to *Diaries and Correspondence of Right Hon. George Rose*.

Mr. Spalding in his “*Italy and the Italian Islands*,” a work in which an immense mass of information is condensed into a small compass, more correctly describes what would appear to have been the real nature of the transactions.

“The two lower castles surrendered on a capitulation with the cardinal, which stipulated that the republicans should at their choice remain unmolested in Naples or be conveyed to Toulon, and two prelates with two noblemen, who were prisoners in the forts, were consigned to Colonel Megean, French commander of the Castle Sant Elmo, as hostages for the performance of the convention. The last incidents of this bloody tale cannot be told without extreme reluctance by any native of the British empire, for they stain deeply one of the brightest names in our national history. While the persons protected by the treaty were preparing to embark, the English fleet under Nelson arrived, bringing the king, the minister Acton, and the ambassador, Sir William Hamilton with his wife, who was at once the queen’s confidante and the evil genius of the brave admiral. The French commandant, treacherous as well as cowardly, surrendered the castle and gave up the hostages without making any condition. The capitulation was declared null, although the cardinal indignantly remonstrated, and retired from the royal service on failing to procure its fulfilment. The republicans were searched

There is an error in this passage as to the arrival of the king and queen. A reference either to Captain Foote's account, or the log books cited by Sir H. Nicolas proves that the king did not arrive at Naples until the 8th of July; the arrival of Lord Nelson was on the 24th of June.³ The king remained on board the "Foudroyant" until the 8th of August, when he returned in that vessel to Palermo, which the queen had not left during the entire time.⁴ This does not affect the opinion expressed as to Lord Nelson. The historian of the French revolution, after describing the executions, especially that of Caraccioli, proceeds:—

"For these acts of cruelty, no sort of apology can or ought to be offered. Whether the capitulation should or should not have been granted is a different or irrelevant question. Suffice it to say that it had taken place, and that by virtue of its provisions the allied powers had gained possession of the castles of Naples. To assert in such a case that the king had not ratified the capitulation, and that without such sanction it was null, is a quibble

the most remarkable instance of the injustice that is done by vindicating the supposed "good nature" of Ferdinand at the expense of his guilty but far more estimable queen. The estimate of Ferdinand's character, which attributes to him this equivocal praise, originated with the Neapolitan Lazzaroni, to whom his good qualities were exactly suited. He had that worthless and selfish good nature which means nothing more than the manifestation of the complacency felt in a strong sense of animal enjoyment, and which in many others as in him is consistent with a cruel, treacherous, and brutal disposition. Those who have read the anecdotes of his life and habits contained in such publications as Michiel's "Secret History of Austria," and Vehse's "Memoirs of the Austrian Court," will not consider the latter word too strong—no other can express his real character. During the worst of the Neapolitan atrocities he was on board the "Foudroyant" without the queen. At all events the unhappy Caroline is not answerable for his perfidies in 1821—and the most cruel act of his life, the refusal to his daughter-in-law to pardon Sanfelice, was altogether his own.

Lord Nelson states that the queen on her knees begged from him the life of Cirillo, but in vain.—*Clarke and McArthur.*

³ "His Sicilian Majesty arrived in this bay on the 10th, and immediately hoisted his standard on board the 'Foudroyant,' where his majesty still remains with all his ministers."—*Nelson to Lord Keith, July 13th, London Gazette, August 17th.*

The logbook of the "Seahorse" explains that although the king arrived off Procida on the 8th, he did not come nearer to the city until the 10th.

⁴ Sir Harris Nicolas's "Nelson Despatches," vol. iii. pp. 506, 507.

rendered, by her influence with the queen, when the wife of the British ambassador at Naples. It must be said, with the light supplied by these documents, that all the accounts that have been published convey representations, more or less inaccurate, of the transactions in which Lord Nelson took a part; it is only by a careful examination of the documents contained in these sources that the truth is to be discovered.

There are facts upon which all persons are agreed. It is beyond all question that the republican troops and the members of the directory occupied the castles of Uovo and Nuovo; that they were in a position in which they could have made a desperate resistance, and inflicted terrible injury on the city; that they had also the prospect of relief from the possible arrival of the French fleet, and that under such circumstances an armistice first, and then a capitulation was entered into, the latter being signed on the 22nd of June by Cardinal Ruffo, as vicar-general of Ferdinand, by Captain Foote as commanding the British naval forces, and also by the Russian and Turkish commanders.

It is equally undeniable that when, on the 24th, Lord Nelson arrived with his fleet, he forcibly prevented this capitulation from being carried into effect—that he subsequently seized the persons who, according to its terms, were to have been conveyed safely to Toulon, and that they were handed over to the vengeance of the Neapolitan government.

Except these leading facts, all matters connected with the transaction, have been the subject either of controversy or of generally received misrepresentation.

On the 21st of June, the fleet of Lord Nelson unexpectedly returned to Palermo, and after manœuvring a few hours without casting anchor, sailed for Naples, to reduce the city to subjection, in concert with the land attack of Cardinal Ruffo. Sir William and Lady Hamilton came on board from Palermo, and accompanied Lord Nelson to Naples. At this period the Neapolitan court were perfectly aware of the terms granted in the capitulation of Castellamare, and that the safety of the rebels in that fort was guaranteed.⁸

⁸ Letter of Sir William Hamilton to Captain Foote, June 21st, 1798.
Extract from one from Sir J. Acton :—

“I return you Captain Foote’s letters. I do not know whether he has granted the demands of the rebel officers to go free to their families. His ultimatum was for surrendering prisoners of war.”—*Foote’s Vindication*, p. 189.

After the departure of Nelson's fleet, the queen heard of the capitulation entered into with Uovo and Nuovo, and found means to overtake the fleet of Lord Nelson, with letters informing him of that capitulation.

By the imperfect information, or the mistake, or possibly even the design of the queen, though the latter seems improbable, the transaction was wholly misrepresented.

On the 27th of June, Lord Nelson writes to Lord Keith, that "on the passage from Palermo to Naples he received letters informing him that an infamous armistice had been entered into with the rebels."⁹ In the same volume is contained an opinion of Lord Nelson, "delivered," as he indorses it himself, "before I saw the treaty of armistice, only from reports met at sea."

This opinion commences with the statement, "The armistice I take for granted is, that if the French and rebels are not relieved by their friends in twenty-one days from the signing of the armistice, then they shall evacuate Naples in this infamous manner to his Sicilian Majesty and triumphant to them, as stated in the article."¹⁰

It was under this entirely false impression of the nature of the truce he signalled to Captain Foote to annul it.

The "Foudroyant" cast anchor about four in the evening. Captain Foote had immediately an interview with Lord Nelson. The latter when apprised of the capitulation, declared that he would not suffer it to be carried into effect, and an intimation to that nature was immediately made to Cardinal Ruffo.

Very opposite representations are given of the state of things at the time when Lord Nelson took this step. Both Southey and Sir Archibald Alison assume that the castles had been then actually surrendered on the terms of the capitulation; Botta, Colletta, and Pepe,¹¹ distinctly state so, and also represent the soldiers that

⁹ Sir H. Nicolas, vol. iii. p. 392. Cardinal Ruffo, it appears from other sources of information, was accused of having been bribed to grant the capitulation, in order to screen some rebels of rank in the castles. This impression was, in all probability, produced on Nelson's mind.

¹⁰ *Ib.* p. 394. "Lord Nelson, misled by the imperfect information he had received, *confounded an armistice with a capitulation.* The misconception pervades the whole of the paper, which, without this explanation, is indeed scarcely intelligible."—Sir H. Nicolas, p. 494.

¹¹ Pepe at the time was a prisoner in one of the dungeons and derived his information from the prisoners who from time to time joined him in their

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Mr. Spalding in his “*Italy and the Italian Islands*,” a work in which an immense mass of information is condensed into a small compass, more correctly describes what would appear to have been the real nature of the transactions.

“The two lower castles surrendered on a capitulation with the cardinal, which stipulated that the republicans should at their choice remain unmolested in Naples or be conveyed to Toulon, and two prelates with two noblemen, who were prisoners in the forts, were consigned to Colonel Megean, French commander of the Castle Sant Elmo, as hostages for the performance of the convention. The last incidents of this bloody tale cannot be told without extreme reluctance by any native of the British empire, for they stain deeply one of the brightest names in our national history. While the persons protected by the treaty were preparing to embark, the English fleet under Nelson arrived, bringing the king, the minister Acton, and the ambassador, Sir William Hamilton with his wife, who was at once the queen’s confidante and the evil genius of the brave admiral. The French commandant, treacherous as well as cowardly, surrendered the castle and gave up the hostages without making any condition. The capitulation was declared null, although the cardinal indignantly remonstrated, and retired from the royal service on failing to procure its fulfilment. The republicans were searched

These opinions are encountered by a defence of Lord Nelson in the third volume of Sir H. Nicolas's *Nelson Despatches*, published in the year 1846, a defence which an influential periodical has not hesitated recently to declare not only acquits Lord Nelson of the heavy charges made against him, but clearly shows that he did nothing more than his plain duty to the Sicilian king, in consigning traitors to a punishment they had richly deserved.⁷

It is impossible fairly to judge Lord Nelson's conduct without carefully reading the facts stated, and the documents contained in the publication of Sir Harris Nicolas. An impartial examination of these facts and documents leads irresistibly to the conclusion that whatever judgment may be formed on the whole transaction, many of the statements generally accepted convey a very inaccurate representation of the occurrences that took place.

The materials from which the most authentic accounts can be derived, will be found in the despatches and other documents published by Sir Harris Nicolas, and those in Clark and McArthur's *Life of Nelson*. The publication in the latter of a despatch of Lord Nelson's, in which he applied the term "infamous" to the capitulation, drew from Captain Foote a vindication of his own conduct, which contains the most valuable and authentic information. Miss Helen Williams, in her *Sketches of the State of Manners and Opinion in the French Republic*, published in 1801, has adduced some authentic documents relating to these transactions. Two or three of great importance are contained in the life of Cardinal Ruffo, presently to be referred to—and Mr. Vernon Harcourt has published in his *Diaries and Correspondence of Sir George Rose*, some letters which were transmitted to that gentleman by Lady Hamilton, in support of her claim upon the British government, when she was reduced to the humiliation of asking for a reward, for the services which she

for and imprisoned, and arbitrary commissions sent to try them. Under the sentence passed by such courts in the metropolis and the provinces, four thousand persons died by the hand of the executioner."—*Spalding's Italy*, vol. iii. pp. 50, 51.

Mr. Spalding falls into the common mistake of representing the king as coming with Lord Nelson, but in other respects the above passage correctly states the occurrences which took place.

The Castle of Sant Elmo was not surrendered until the 13th of July.—*Lord Nelson's Despatches*; *Sir N. H. Nicolas*, vol. iii. p. 403.

⁷ See the article in *Blackwood's Magazine*, March, 1860.

rendered, by her influence with the queen, when the wife of the British ambassador at Naples. It must be said, with the light supplied by these documents, that all the accounts that have been published convey representations, more or less inaccurate, of the transactions in which Lord Nelson took a part; it is only by a careful examination of the documents contained in these sources that the truth is to be discovered.

There are facts upon which all persons are agreed. It is beyond all question that the republican troops and the members of the directory occupied the castles of Uovo and Nuovo; that they were in a position in which they could have made a desperate resistance, and inflicted terrible injury on the city; that they had also the prospect of relief from the possible arrival of the French fleet, and that under such circumstances an armistice first, and then a capitulation was entered into, the latter being signed on the 22nd of June by Cardinal Ruffo, as vicar-general of Ferdinand, by Captain Foote as commanding the British naval forces, and also by the Russian and Turkish commanders.

It is equally undeniable that when, on the 24th, Lord Nelson arrived with his fleet, he forcibly prevented this capitulation from being carried into effect—that he subsequently seized the persons who, according to its terms, were to have been conveyed safely to Toulon, and that they were handed over to the vengeance of the Neapolitan government.

Except these leading facts, all matters connected with the transaction, have been the subject either of controversy or of generally received misrepresentation.

On the 21st of June, the fleet of Lord Nelson unexpectedly returned to Palermo, and after manœuvring a few hours without casting anchor, sailed for Naples, to reduce the city to subjection, in concert with the land attack of Cardinal Ruffo. Sir William and Lady Hamilton came on board from Palermo, and accompanied Lord Nelson to Naples. At this period the Neapolitan court were perfectly aware of the terms granted in the capitulation of Castellamare, and that the safety of the rebels in that fort was guaranteed.^s

^s Letter of Sir William Hamilton to Captain Foote, June 21st, 1798.

Extract from one from Sir J. Acton :—

“I return you Captain Foote's letters. I do not know whether he has granted the demands of the rebel officers to go free to their families. His ultimatum was for surrendering prisoners of war.”—*Foote's Vindication*, p. 139.

After the departure of Nelson's fleet, the queen heard of the capitulation entered into with Uovo and Nuovo, and found means to overtake the fleet of Lord Nelson, with letters informing him of that capitulation.

By the imperfect information, or the mistake, or possibly even the design of the queen, though the latter seems improbable, the transaction was wholly misrepresented.

On the 27th of June, Lord Nelson writes to Lord Keith, that "on the passage from Palermo to Naples he received letters informing him that an infamous armistice had been entered into with the rebels."⁹ In the same volume is contained an opinion of Lord Nelson, "delivered," as he indorses it himself, "before I saw the treaty of armistice, only from reports met at sea."

This opinion commences with the statement, "The armistice I take for granted is, that if the French and rebels are not relieved by their friends in twenty-one days from the signing of the armistice, then they shall evacuate Naples in this infamous manner to his Sicilian Majesty and triumphant to them, as stated in the article."¹⁰

It was under this entirely false impression of the nature of the truce he signalled to Captain Foote to annul it.

The "Foudroyant" cast anchor about four in the evening. Captain Foote had immediately an interview with Lord Nelson. The latter when apprised of the capitulation, declared that he would not suffer it to be carried into effect, and an intimation to that nature was immediately made to Cardinal Ruffo.

Very opposite representations are given of the state of things at the time when Lord Nelson took this step. Both Southey and Sir Archibald Alison assume that the castles had been then actually surrendered on the terms of the capitulation; Botta, Colletta, and Pepe,¹¹ distinctly state so, and also represent the soldiers that

⁹ Sir H. Nicolas, vol. iii. p. 392. Cardinal Ruffo, it appears from other sources of information, was accused of having been bribed to grant the capitulation, in order to screen some rebels of rank in the castles. This impression was, in all probability, produced on Nelson's mind.

¹⁰ *Ib.* p. 394. "Lord Nelson, misled by the imperfect information he had received, *confounded an armistice with a capitulation.*" The misconception pervades the whole of the paper, which, without this explanation, is indeed scarcely intelligible.—Sir H. Nicolas, p. 494.

¹¹ Pepe at the time was a prisoner in one of the dungeons and derived his information from the prisoners who from time to time joined him in their

garrisoned them as having been all the previous night on board the vessels that were to take them to Toulon, and only prevented sailing by an unfavourable breeze.

Nevertheless, it is perfectly certain that the castles were not taken possession of until the evening of the 26th.¹² It has been said that the soldiers were even then taken out of them on the faith that the terms of the capitulation would be fulfilled.¹³ But it is beyond all

confinement. His statement is distinct: that before the arrival of Lord Nelson's fleet the embarkation had commenced.

"Towards evening," he writes, "the patriots began to evacuate the different castles, *not as had been agreed upon, with the honours of war, but shamefully driven before the Russian soldiers* until they reached the vessels destined to bear them thence. This was a sad omen of future misery and of new disasters. The anticipation of a favourable night breeze alone prevented them from immediately weighing anchor. On the following day, Nelson's fleet, composed of numerous ships of the line, made its appearance in the Bay of Naples. Although the expected breeze had arisen during the course of the night, the vessels containing our people had not yet made sail. On the next day they were towed from their moorings and stationed immediately under the cannon of the *Castel del Uovo*. Their helms and sails were dismantled, their anchors cast, and guards were put on board; in a word, they were converted into regular prisons."—*Pepe's Memoirs*, English translation, vol. i. p. 106.

Notwithstanding the positive and apparently satisfactory character of this testimony, a careful comparison of its statements with the written documents of the time, make it plain that Pepe, writing after the interval of many years, and recording the impressions received while he was passing through the miserable days of a dungeon life, mistook the period at which the embarkation took place.

That which he describes must have taken place after Nelson's consent to the embarkation was given to the cardinal. The passages marked in Italics are sufficient to prove this. It is irreconcilable with all the known facts to believe that before Nelson's arrival the troops should be driven by the Russians without the honours of war, although such a proceeding exactly tallies with the supposition that the embarkation took place under Nelson's protest, although with his permission. If Pepe's account were correct, the capitulation had been violated before Nelson's arrival. But the statement that the vessels were moored under the guns of Castel Uovo, places the matter beyond doubt. It is demonstrated that Castel Uovo was not in the hands of the royalists until the 26th.

¹² "Sant Elmo is yet in possession of the French, but the Castles of Uovo and Nuovo, I took possession of last evening, and his Sicilian Majesty's colours are now flying from them."—*Nelson's Despatch to the Admiralty, June 27th.*

¹³ It is perfectly possible that notwithstanding the proclamation of Nelson many of the soldiers who left the castles may have believed that they were

doubt that on the 25th, Lord Nelson had addressed to the garrisons of the forts a proclamation, which he certainly intended should reach them, in which he distinctly stated that he would not suffer them to embark for Toulon, and that they must throw themselves unconditionally on the mercy of their king.¹⁴

All the evidence leads to the conclusion that on the morning of the 24th, nothing had been done towards the evacuation of the forts. The terms of the capitulation were, that the embarkation and evacuation should be contemporaneous; there appears to have been some delay and difficulty in obtaining the polacres.

leaving them in accordance with the terms of the capitulation that they were doing so. This would account for much of the misrepresentation upon this subject which has prevailed.

14

*His Britannic Majesty's Ship Foudroyant,
Naples Bay, June 25th, 1799.*

"Rear Admiral Lord Nelson, K.B., Commander of his Britannic Majesty's fleet in the Bay of Naples, acquaints the rebellious subjects of his Sicilian Majesty in the castles of Uovo and Nuovo that he will not permit them to embark or quit those places. They must surrender themselves to his Majesty's royal mercy.
NELSON."

—*Nicolas*, vol. iii. p. 386.

"As you will believe, the cardinal and myself have begun our career by a complete difference of opinion. He will send the rebels to Toulon. I say they shall not go. He thinks one house in Naples more to be prized than his sovereign's honour. Trowbridge and Ball are gone to the cardinal for him to read my declaration to the French and the rebels, whom he persists in calling patriots: what a prostitution of the word. I shall send Foote to get the gun boats from Procida."—*Nelson to Admiral Duckworth, June 25th, 1799.—Ibid.* 387.

It is quite plain that at the time of writing these letters, the "rebels" or patriots were still in possession of the forts, and that Nelson desired a declaration to be read to them, apprising them that the capitulation would not be carried into effect.

See the subsequent correspondence of the 26th, page 432. Nelson yielded to Cardinal Ruffo so far as to permit them to be placed on board the polacres, and to wait the decision of the king. It is this that has given rise to the charge that they were taken out of the castles under pretence of fulfilling the terms of the capitulation; but it is plain that when they left the castles Lord Nelson unequivocally declared his determination, although it is quite true that their embarkation was in part fulfilment of the terms of the capitulation—intended, it would seem, perhaps, by themselves, certainly by Ruffo, and by the Russian commander, to throw an obstacle in the way of the king's annulling it.

A letter from Captain Foote to Lord Nelson, dated half-past seven on the morning of the 24th, contains these sentences :—

“ I am obliged to send the ‘ Bulldog ’ to convey the polacres on board of which the republicans are about to embark for Toulon, as it was particularly stated they should have a British ship of war to escort them. When the capitulation is put into effect and the troops of his Sicilian Majesty, or those of his allies, have taken possession of the forts, I shall be better able to judge what is to be done.”¹⁵

The letter manifestly implies that nothing then had been done in the execution of the capitulation at the time when it was written.¹⁶

Such appears to be the true account of the circumstances under which Lord Nelson believed himself warranted in annulling the capitulation, or rather in suspending its execution until its terms should be submitted to the king.

¹⁵ Letter of Captain Foote.—*Foote's Vindication*, p. 141.

¹⁶ See the Petition of prisoners to Lord Nelson.—*Miss Helen Williams' Sketches*, vol. ii. p. 120.

As this document, addressed to Lord Nelson, may be assumed accurately to state the truth, it throws important light on the transactions :—

[TRANSLATION.]

“ *To his Excellency Lord Nelson, Admiral of the British Fleet in the Mediterranean.*

“ Excellency,—The persons on board the Polacre, No. 14, and who lately made part of the garrisons of Castel Nuovo and Castel del Uovo, represent to your Excellency, that on the 15th of June, his eminence, Cardinal Ruffo, vicar-general of his Majesty the Sicilian King, published a proclamation to the people, in which he enjoined respect to the flag of truce which should be sent to the forts to capitulate, in order that the articles of the capitulation should be exactly fulfilled. By this proclamation it was admitted, that the troops which formed the blockade of the forts were regular troops, belonging to his Sicilian Majesty, and to his allies ; and a capitulation having been proposed by the said vicar-general, which should be guaranteed by the allied powers, that is to say, by England, Russia, and the Ottoman Porte, on the 21st of June, the articles of this capitulation, after the approbation and signature of Citizen Migan, commander of the Fort St. Elmo, were signed with the usual formalities, on the part of Great Britain, by Commodore Foote, who then commanded the British squadron in this road.

“ The capitulation prescribed, that the garrisons should surrender the two forts, with the arms and stores to the army of the King of Sicily and his

Nelson rested his entire justification on these two points, that Cardinal Ruffo had no power to enter into the capitulation without submitting it for ratification to the king, and that nothing had been done to carry it into effect when he arrived.¹⁷

allies, and should march out with the honours of war, and ground their arms on the shore ; and that such persons as did not choose to return to their homes, should be embarked on board flags of truce, and be transported to Toulon. After the arrival of the British fleet in this road, commanded by your excellency, the capitulation was begun to be put in execution. The garrisons of the forts on their part set at liberty the state prisoners and the English prisoners of war, and gave up to the troops of his British Majesty the gate of the royal palace which leads to the new fort, and on the other side the troops of his Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias, attended the march of the garrison with the honours of war, out of the forts, on the side of the arsenal of the marine, where they grounded their arms, and embarked in fourteen transports to be conveyed to Toulon. By these transactions the articles of the capitulation, which were signed, have been ratified by Russia and England, the troops of which powers have received the prisoners, and taken possession of the gates of the castle.

“It is now twenty-four days that we are lying in this road, unprovided with everything necessary to existence ; we have nothing but bread to eat, we drink nothing but putrid water, or wine mingled with sea-water, and have nothing but the bare planks to sleep on. Our houses have been entirely pillaged, and consequently we can receive no assistance from thence, and the greater part of our relations have been either imprisoned or massacred. Our deplorable situation has already been productive of diseases, and on board this Polacre there are five persons sick of an infectious fever, which threatens the lives of the whole.

“We are persuaded that all the treatment which we suffer, after having capitulated, and after having on our side put the articles of the capitulation religiously into execution, is entirely unknown to your Excellency and to his Sicilian Majesty ; your fidelity and his benevolence being engaged in our deliverance. The delay of the execution of the capitulation gives us room to claim and implore his and your justice, in order that a treaty concluded with four of the most civilised powers of Europe, who have always appreciated the inviolability of treaties, should be executed as speedily as possible. We hope that by means of your good offices with his Sicilian Majesty, due execution will be given to the articles of a capitulation, which has been signed with good faith, and religiously executed on the part of the garrison, who implore your protection and the justice of the Powers, and praying you to give attention to the present, &c., &c., &c.”

ANSWER OF LORD NELSON.

“I have shown your paper to your gracious king, who must be the best and only judge of the merits and demerits of his subjects.

(Signed) NELSON.”

¹⁷ “Neither Cardinal Ruffo, nor Captain Foote, nor any other person, had any

Under the impression that it was merely an armistice, he treated it as terminated by his own arrival. Learning that it was a regular and formal capitulation, he regarded it as invalid without the king's ratification, and stopped it, as nothing had been done.

The most authoritative statement of the law of nations on such a subject is to be found in Grotius. In his chapter "*De fide minorum potestatum in bello*," he thus writes of armistices or truces:—

"To grant truces is the business of every general, even subordinate ones, as far as concerns themselves. *For such truces do not bind other generals of equal authority*, as the history of Fabius and Marcellus in Livy declares."—*Grotius, De Jure Belli*, vol. i. p. 385.

Lord Nelson, therefore, was right in his opinion, that on the arrival of his force he was at liberty to annul an armistice. When he entered the Bay of Naples, he saw the flag of truce still flying from the forts and the British ships—but the armistice was only in existence for the purpose of carrying out the capitulation, which was completely entered into, and which every preparation was making to carry into effect.

No such principle applies to capitulations. Once completed power to enter into any treaty with the rebels, that even the paper which they signed was not acted on, as I very happily arrived at Naples and prevented such an infamous transaction from taking place; therefore, when the rebels surrendered they came out of the castles as they ought, without any honours of war, and trusting to the judgment of their sovereign. I put aside (and sent them notice of it) the infamous treaty, and they surrendered as I have said."—*Letter of Lord Nelson to Mr. Stephens, Feb. 10th, 1803.*

"*Foudroyant, June 26th, 1799.*

"Rear Admiral Lord Nelson arrived in the British fleet the 24th of June, in the Bay of Naples, and found a treaty entered into with the rebels, which in his opinion cannot be carried into execution without the approbation of his Sicilian Majesty."—*Written opinion delivered to Cardinal Ruffo. Nicolas*, vol. iii. p. 388.

"Under this opinion the rebels came out of the castles, which were instantly occupied by the marines of the squadron."—*Nelson to Lord Keith*, *ib.* 393.

In the copy of this opinion, published by Sir Harris Nicolas, and that printed in Cardinal Foote's vindication, there is a curious discrepancy.

In the latter there are added at the end the words, "Lord St. Vincent, Lord Keith."—*Foote's Vindication*, p. 74.

they are inviolable, and by the law of nations and of war, every general conducting military operations has of necessity authority to enter into capitulations. No general has authority to surrender territory or fortresses. "But," continues Grotius, "it is in the power of generals to grant the possession of things not yet acquired, because towns sometimes, and men often, surrender themselves in war on condition of lives being spared, or liberty or property, about which concessions the state of things does not allow the decision of the supreme authority to be asked, and by parity of reasoning the right is also given to commanders who are not the highest within the limits of the matters which are given them to execute. Maherbal had given to some Romans who had escaped from the battle at Trasimenum, Annibal being absent for so long a time as to leave room for this, not only his pledge for their lives, but if they gave up their arms, the liberty of departing each with a single suit of apparel. But Annibal retained them, alleging to them that it was not in the power of Maherbal to pledge himself, without consulting him, to those who surrendered that they should be free from harm and penalty. The judgment of Livy on this act follows—the pledge was observed by Annibal with Punic faith."—*Grotius, De Jure Belli*, (Whewell's edition), vol. i. p. 390.

Nor can this implied authority be got rid of, by any secret instructions—"He who placed a person in command is bound, even though the person so placed acts against secret orders within the limits of his public function."—*Grotius* (Whewell's translation), vol. i. p. 385.

It follows from these principles—unquestionably the principles of common sense—that Cardinal Ruffo had full power to accept the surrender of the castles—that no secret instructions, even if they existed, could alter or affect that power as regarded strangers, and that the capitulation entered into was valid without any ratification from the king.

"Nothing," said Captain Foote, in his second vindication, "can be more evident than the fact that a solemn capitulation had been agreed upon, formally signed by the chief commander of the forces of the King of Naples, by the Russian commander, and myself, all duly authorised to sign any capitulation in the absence of superior power. This was not a treaty of peace, subject to ratification; it was not a truce liable to be broken; it

was a serious agreement for surrender upon terms which involved the lives and properties of men who might have chosen to forfeit their lives and properties, had they not relied principally on the faith of a British officer. One hour after the signature of the convention was sufficient to render it sacred instead of thirty-six hours . . . Although nothing had been done in the execution of the terms agreed upon, it was equally binding on all the contracting parties. The truth, however, is that some parts of the agreement had been performed, and actual advantage was taken of those parts of the capitulation that had been thus executed, to seize the unhappy men, who, having been thus deceived by a sacred pledge, were sacrificed in a cruel and despotic manner."¹⁸—

It is plain that Nelson reached Naples with the strongest prejudices against Ruffo. In his very first interview with Captain Foote, he told that officer that "he was aware he had been imposed upon by that worthless fellow Cardinal Ruffo, who had been endeavouring to form a party hostile to the interests of his sovereign."¹⁹ Disliking him from the first, he readily adopted all the impressions of his conduct which Lady Hamilton conveyed to him from the queen, and he entered the Bay of Naples determined, if possible, to prevent the accomplishment of that, which he certainly believed to be, a mercy to rebels in contempt of the authority of the king.

But it is much more than doubtful that any such instructions, as are alleged, were ever given to Cardinal Ruffo. The only evidence of their existence is, that Lord Nelson was shown a letter, in which the king afterwards upbraided the cardinal with having acted in opposition to his commands. What value is to be attached to such a declaration, made when the king wished to justify his breach of the capitulation, the character of Ferdinand enables us perfectly to appreciate. It is inconsistent with all the acts both of the cardinal and the king. In all Nelson's letters written at the time, he nowhere mentions that such directions had been given. In the long and angry discussions which he had with Ruffo, there is no trace of such an allegation being made.²⁰

¹⁸ Letter of Captain Foote to Mr. Clarke, March 18, 1802.—*Foote's Vindication*, p. 47.—*Quarterly Review*, 1810.

¹⁹ Foote's "Vindication," p. 90.

²⁰ The king's own letter of the 27th of June to Cardinal Ruffo (note 19) is entirely inconsistent with it.

Instead of being visited with punishment, Ruffo received honours and rewards. It was not competent for the king to disavow his capitulation as an act of almost treasonable disobedience, and at the same time award him the honours only due to the faithful and the true.

But it is incorrect to say that nothing had been done under the capitulation. Naples had been saved from that pillage and ruin which a conflict would inevitably have caused. The republicans in the city had given up the struggle which they were prepared to prolong to the last extremity, and not only this, but many had returned from the country and openly shown themselves on the faith of the amnesty which had been proclaimed.

A few days before the capitulation, the garrison of the fortress of Vigliena when pressed to the last, had set a match to the magazine, and blew themselves, their assailants, and the fortress into the sea. One of the garrison escaped by leaping into the sea and making his way to Castelnovo. The threat of imitating this daring act by the defenders of Uovo and Nuovo, influenced very much the cardinal to grant the capitulation. Botta does not exaggerate when he says that by that step both Naples and the castles were preserved.²¹ Had Ruffo not yielded the demands of the republicans, Nelson would have found on his arrival the castles reduced to shattered walls, and probably the greater part of Naples a heap of ruins.

On the 18th of June, Captain Foote offered to the defenders of the Castle of Uovo "an asylum under the flag of his sovereign ;"²² the offer it is true was rejected, but on the 20th of June he signed, as representing England, the capitulation, which guaranteed to these unfortunate men a safe passage to Toulon and the conduct of a British man-of-war. They had a right to believe, they did believe, that the faith of England was pledged to the fulfilment of that condition, and no disavowal by the Sicilian monarch of the act of his vicar-general, could release England from the obligation.

But while it is impossible, on principles of international law, to justify the act by which the capitulation was annulled, the charge against Lord Nelson really is, that he took a mistaken view of the position in which he was placed. "It was not

²¹ Botta, vol. iii. p. 433.

²² Letter of Captain Foote to the garrison of Castle Uovo, June 18.—*Foote's Vindication*, p. 159.

only his opinion at the time that he acted correctly, but he retained it to the end of his life, and if it be now thought that he was mistaken and that he had no right to suspend the capitulation, either on the ground that he arrived before its conditions were executed, or because Cardinal Ruffo had disobeyed the king's orders, yet assuredly the error might have been committed without the slightest departure from those principles of duty, patriotism, humanity, and honour, which distinguished his whole previous career."²³

Neither is it necessary to resort to the supposition of female influence to account for the course which he adopted. The crimes of the French revolution had provoked in the minds of men, attached to the cause of order, an intensity of hatred which incapacitated them from being dispassionate judges of any question relating to its adherents. With Nelson, hatred of the French revolutionists was a passion as strong as his loyalty or his devotion to England, and but little of argument was needed to convince him that he was justified in annulling a capitulation, which in his eyes enabled traitors to cheat justice and insult the majesty of their sovereign, by escaping the punishment which it was a duty to mankind to inflict. The Jacobin was regarded by many besides Lord Nelson—by none perhaps with more earnestness—as the enemy of God and man. "The rebels came out of their castle as they ought, and as I hope all those who are false to their king and country will, to be hanged or otherwise disposed of as their sovereign thought proper," was Lord Nelson's description of the transaction.²⁴ It is difficult in our tranquil times to realise the intensity of the Anti-Gallican and Anti-Jacobin feelings which the horrors of the early days of the revolution had evoked. Sir Samuel Romilly tells us that he found that feeling an obstacle even to his attempts to humanise the penal code.

Lady Hamilton, it is true, had her influence. With her husband she accompanied Lord Nelson to Naples, and from their representations, reflecting the vengeful vindictiveness of the court, there can be little doubt that Nelson derived many of the impressions which acted so powerfully on his judgment. Lady Hamilton appears, in his interview with Ruffo, conducting the argument for

²³ Harris Nicolas, "Nelson Despatches," vol. iii. p. 498.

²⁴ Letter of Lord Nelson, *ante*.



cruelty. She was an eye-witness of the last struggles of the ill-fated Caraccioli, as he was hanged from the yard-arm of the Sicilian ship.

It must be remembered, that in all the transactions with the Court of Naples, Lady Hamilton was the moving and directing spirit. The queen and the wife of the British ambassador completely superseded their husbands in the management of state affairs; and the original plan of Nelson's expedition to Naples was entirely arranged on communications made through Lady Hamilton from the queen.²⁵

Unfortunate it may have been for Nelson at such a moment to have given his confidence to an adviser who was influenced by the malignant passions of the queen, or permitted his judgment to be controlled by counsels, the secret motive of which was the gratification of an almost fiendish thirst for vengeance. But surely an impartial review of all the facts must lead to the conclusion that the very severest censure, which could with a shadow of justice be passed upon the British hero, is immeasurably removed from those imputations which represent him as deliberately violating good faith to gratify the requests of an abandoned woman. Artifice and misrepresentation may have succeeded in warping his judgment; his own strong political antipathies may have blinded him to considerations which ought to have controlled him; his very unsuspecting and generous spirit may have made him the more easily lend himself to the vindictiveness of the court—a sovereign driven from his throne made the most powerful appeal to the chivalrous loyalty—one driven by the French to the passionate patriotism of Nelson's heart:²⁶ but no one would have dared to propose to him designedly to violate the meanest obligation of good faith. In the acts which in these unhappy transactions have tarnished his fame, he most assuredly had persuaded himself or suffered others to persuade him that he was only exercising a right and a needful severity towards traitors to their king.

The protest of Cardinal Ruffo against the violation of the

²⁵ Letter of Lady Hamilton to Lord Nelson, June 12.—*Harris Nicolas, Nelson Despatches*, vol. iii. p. 491.

²⁶ How far Nelson was completely blinded to the real character of the Sicilian court we may gather from expressions in two of his letters.

“I must beg leave,” he says in his letter to Mr. Stephens already quoted,

capitulation is not mentioned by Colletta,²⁷ yet that protest was carried to an extent which proved the sincerity with which it was made. He distinctly refused to permit his troops to join in any new attack upon the forts, and threatened to withdraw his army from Naples, and leave to the English the whole disgrace of breaking the terms previously agreed on. He went personally on board the flag-ship on the 24th to remonstrate with Lord Nelson, and left it unconvinced even by the eloquence of Lady Hamilton. His obstinate adherence to his engagement drew upon him the personal rebuke of the sovereign, and a peremptory order of Ferdinand removed him from Naples, under pretence of attending on the king.²⁸ On the 28th of June he was conveyed to Palermo in one of the ships of the British squadron, and on the same evening Captain Foote was ordered to take the "Sea Horse" to

"to warn you to be very careful how you mention the characters of such excellent sovereigns as the king and queen of Naples."

In a letter to Lady Hamilton, written a short time before the unfortunate transactions at Naples, he says of the queen—"I declare to God my whole study is how best to meet her approbation."—*Southey's Life of Nelson*.

²⁷ When Colletta's history was written, the life of Cardinal Ruffo, in which the documents connected with that protest were first given to the world, had not been published. The cardinal thus bore all the odium of being an assenting party to the cruelties of the court, except so far as he was relieved by the statement of his first dispute with Nelson, published in the *Vindication of Captain Foote*. The contemporaneous accounts were all written in ignorance of this, the most remarkable and most important incident in the transactions.

²⁸ In the "Life and Correspondence of the Right Hon. George Rose," some letters are published which were sent to Sir G., then Mr. Rose, by Lady Hamilton, with a view of supporting the claims which she made upon the British government. The following explains the part taken by the Sicilian court:—

GENERAL ACTON TO THE DUKE OF SOLANDRA.

"Palermo, 27th June, 1799.

"YOUR EXCELLENCY,—The king having decided that Cardinal Ruffo should be conducted here by one of the men-of-war, to be chosen for this purpose by the admiral of the British squadron, Lord Nelson has designed to command that your excellency, in concert with General Gamba, if this latter be not occupied or prevented, and Colonel Baron Tschudy, be charged to execute the said removal, with all the caution that circumstances demand, and to consign the above-mentioned admiral, to whom his majesty has already given the corresponding orders, that the same should be embarked and removed here. In the royal name, I urge upon your excellency the prompt and exact accomplishment of this desire.

"JOHN ACTON."

wait upon his Majesty's commands." Probably Captain Foote's vessel was the one which conveyed the cardinal away.

It is not very easy to trace through conflicting accounts the accurate course of these events. All must be tested by a reference to documents. Colletta states positively that when the news of the capitulation reached Palermo, the fleet of Lord Nelson had already sailed: that the queen sent for Lady Hamilton and induced her to embark with Sir William on board a fast-sailing corvette, which overtook the "Foudroyant" at daybreak on the 24th as it was entering the Bay of Naples. Sir Harris Nicolas quotes from the diary of Miss Knight, a lady then forming part of the household of the Queen of Naples, an extract which proves

GENERAL ACTON TO CARDINAL RUFFO.

"Palermo, June 27th, 1799.

"YOUR EMINENCE,—The king, finding it indispensable for his royal service that your excellency should repair instantly to this capital, that his majesty may be minutely informed by you of every event that has happened, to enable his majesty to make important provisions for the good government of the affairs of this city and kingdom; has, therefore, resolved and commanded, that you should immediately embark on board one of the men-of-war that shall be selected for this purpose by the admiral of the British squadron, Lord Nelson; and be conveyed immediately here for the above-mentioned object: his majesty having already given to the aforesaid English admiral his royal commands concerning the persons who, during your eminence's absence, will assume the military command and regulate all civil affairs.

"In the royal name I command speedy obedience, the corresponding orders being already given to the above-mentioned admiral.

"Your Eminence,
"JOHN ACTON."

FROM HIS MAJESTY THE KING TO CARDINAL RUFFO.

"Palermo, June 27th, 1799.

"I have heard with inexpressible consolation of the arrival after dinner of my frigate from Naples, and also of the happy arrival there of the very worthy and faithful admiral, Lord Nelson. I have read the declaration which he, in the form of observations, has despatched to you, which could not be more wise, reasonable, and adapted to the end, and truly evangelical.

"I do not doubt that you immediately conformed to it, and acted in consequence on his advice. Otherwise that which would be impossible, after the many proofs of fidelity and attachment given me in the past.

"May the Lord preserve you, as with all my heart I desire.

"FERDINANDO R."

(The original is in the king's own handwriting.)

²⁹ Order of Lord Nelson, June 28.—*Foote's Vindication*, p. 42.

that on the 20th of June, Sir William, Lady Hamilton, and Lord Nelson, left Palermo together for Naples.²⁰ The latter is therefore the account adopted in the text.²¹

It would not be right to close this note without a reference to a publication which has recently appeared in Paris, in which a totally different view of all these transactions is attempted to be sustained.²²

In the view of this writer, Lord Nelson alone is responsible for annulling the capitulation. Cardinal Ruffo, so far from disobeying the orders, truly represented the feeling of his court. But it suited the purposes of England to wage a war of extermination against French Jacobinism, and Nelson carried out his country's policy in defiance of the merciful intentions of Ferdinand and Caroline.

²⁰ Harris Nicolas, "Nelson Despatches," vol. iii. p. 491.

²¹ The story of the queen having sent Lady Hamilton to overtake the fleet of Lord Nelson, has been so frequently and so positively stated, that it is difficult to believe it entirely without foundation.

The following extracts are printed by Sir H. Nicolas from Miss Knight's journal. It cannot be supposed that they untruly represented what occurred.

"June 16th, 1799.

"Dined at Sir William Hamilton's. In the afternoon went with them and Lord Nelson on board the 'Foudroyant,' where Lord Nelson has hoisted his flag, a fine eighty-gun ship. Went on board the 'Serapis,' Captain Duncan, a forty-four gun-ship, and afterwards dined at Sir William Hamilton's. The fleet is to sail to-morrow morning early for Naples, and the hereditary Prince, with Duke Gravina and General Acton, goes on board the Admiral's ship, as do Sir William and Lady Hamilton, with a commission from the king. Cardinal Ruffo, with his army, will be at Naples by the time the fleet arrives, and it appears certain that the Castle of St. Elmo will capitulate as soon as the fleet is seen."

New intelligence as to the movements of the French fleet altered this arrangement. On the 21st, Miss Knight writes in her diary:—

"Lord Nelson came in his barge, the 'Foudroyant' and 'Earl St. Vincent' cutter lying off. . . Met Lord Nelson and Sir William and Lady Hamilton at dinner on board the 'Serapis,' Captain Duncan, and at five they all embarked for Naples whither the fleet goes."

Lord Nelson certainly received the intelligence of the capitulation on his passage from Palermo to Naples. The statements are all reconciled by believing that Lady Hamilton left Palermo with Lord Nelson—that the queen did send a fast sailing corvette to overtake the fleet, and that her letters to Lady Hamilton overtook her on board.

²² Baron Hervey St. Denys, *Histoire de la révolution dans les deux Siciles*, depuis 1793. Paris 1856.

Letters are published in this volume as having passed on the 26th, which, so far from implicating Lord Nelson in the graver accusation of having annulled the capitulation after its execution, directly acquit him of that charge.³³

On the report by Cardinal Ruffo to the Turkish and Russian commanders, a protest was formally drawn up and signed by the three, in which they stated their determination to carry the terms of the capitulation into effect in spite of any opposition of the British admiral.

This was followed by a negotiation, which resulted in the following letter from Sir William Hamilton to Cardinal Ruffo.³⁴

“ EMINENCE,

“ *June 26th, 1799.*

“ My Lord Nelson begs me to assure you that he is resolved to do nothing to break the armistice which your Eminence has granted to the Castles of Naples.

“ I have the honour to be,

“ W^M. HAMILTON.”

This letter was brought by Captains Trowbridge and Ball, and a written memorandum was handed to Ruffo by the former.

“ I, Captain Trowbridge, have authority to declare, on the part

³³ In Sir Harris Nicolas's “ Nelson Despatches,” vol. iii. p. 395, a letter is printed without a date, but which was plainly written on the evening of the 26th, from Lord Nelson to Cardinal Ruffo, which probably completes all the documentary evidence which can now throw light on the transaction :

“ Sir,—I am just honoured with your Eminence's letter, and as his Excellency Sir William Hamilton wrote to you this morning, that I will not on any account break the armistice entered into by you, I hope your Eminence will be satisfied that I am supporting your ideas; I send once more Captains Trowbridge and Ball to arrange with your Eminence everything relative to an attack on St. Elmo, whenever your army and cannon are ready to proceed against it. I will land 1200 men to proceed against it under the present armistice. I have only to rejoice that his Britannic Majesty's fleet is here to secure the city of Naples from all attacks by sea.

“ I am, &c.,

“ NELSON.”

³⁴ These documents are taken from a life of Cardinal Ruffo, published by Sacchinelli at Naples, in 1836.

“ Sacchinelli, Vita del Cardinale Ruffo. Memorie Storiche sulla Vita del Cardinale Fabrizio Ruffo. Scritti dall al Domenico Sacchinelli giù segretario

of Lord Nelson, to his Eminence, that he will not oppose the embarkation of the rebels and the people who compose the garrisons of the castle."

But this document Captain Trowbridge refused to sign, on the ground that he was only authorised to treat of military and not of diplomatic affairs.³⁵

The baron goes on to state, that on the faith of those letters the garrisons of the castles embarked on that evening, and the castles were surrendered; but soon after, Ruffo heard with amazement that the members of the directory who had thus left the Castle of Uovo, were carried prisoners on board the vessels of the English fleet. It is also asserted that Lord Nelson, in consequence of his remonstrances, placed Captain Foote under arrest. The latter assertion is certainly unfounded. The statement that

de quel Porporato con osservazione sulle opere di Coco, di Botta, e di Colletta. Napoli, 1836.

In an appendix to this life they are all set out as fac-similes of the originals with elaborate typography. No one denies their genuineness.

The protest of Ruffo and the Russian and Turkish commanders declared:—

"That the capitulation of the castles of Naples was useful, necessary, and honourable for his Majesty the King of the Two Sicilies, and his allies, the King of Great Britain, the Emperor of Russia, and the Sublime Porte, that this treaty had terminated without shedding of blood, or domestic and foreign war—that it facilitated the expulsion of the republican armies—that having been solemnly guaranteed by the high powers already mentioned, it would be an outrage upon public faith, either to suspend its execution or to violate it. In begging of Rear-Admiral Lord Nelson to recognise the capitulation, they declared themselves perfectly determined to execute it in all its parts; and that whoever would interfere with this must answer for it before God and man."—*Sacchinelli's Life of Cardinal Ruffo; Baron Hervey St. Denys' Neapolitan Revolutions.*

This protest was ineffectual, and Cardinal Ruffo then wrote to Lord Nelson that, "if the British admiral would not recognise the capitulation of the castles, which bore the name of a British naval officer, the British government must bear all the responsibility, that in his capacity of Vicar-General of Naples, rather than consent to an act of bad faith, without example in the history of nations, he was firmly resolved to place everything in the position which it occupied before the treaty—that consequently he was about to withdraw his troops from the city, and leave the English free to act with their own proper forces."—*Ibid.*

It was this that elicited the mission of Captains Trowbridge and Ball, the letter of Sir William Hamilton, and finally that from Nelson himself.

³⁵ Life of Cardinal Ruffo.

³⁶ Baron Hervey St. Denys.

the garrisons finally left the castles on the faith of the capitulation, is positively contradicted by the account contained in the despatches of Lord Nelson.³⁷ The letters published in Sir George Rose's *Memoirs* are conclusive evidence that in opposing the acts of Lord Nelson, Cardinal Ruffo was certainly not carrying out the intentions of the king.

The letters of the 26th supply the evidence of what took place on that day. An armistice, it will be remembered, had been entered into, to last until the capitulation should be executed. Nelson agreed to observe the armistice, but refused to recognise the capitulation until it should receive the king's ratification. This is plain, not only on the very terms of Sir William Hamilton's letter, but still more from the language of Captain Trowbridge, that he was authorised to treat only on military, and not on diplomatic matters.

Lord Nelson permitted, it is true, the embarkation of the troops, but under his own distinct declaration, conveyed to them the previous evening, that if they left the castles, they did so unconditionally submitting to the king; and Colletta tells us, that contrary to the terms of the capitulation, they embarked without any of the honours of war. That he never assented to their embarking for Toulon, is evident from the very fact that they did not sail there, but were detained in the polacres moored under the guns of the fleet.

Everything then waited the decision of the king; that decision arrived on the 28th. It annulled the capitulation, and virtually ordered Cardinal Ruffo into custody if he any longer opposed the measures of the king. Then it was that Nelson published the king's ordinance, and proceeded to deal with the prisoners as traitors given up to the justice of their sovereign, and in that proceeding it would appear that the Turkish and Russian commanders at least silently acquiesced.

In judging then of Lord Nelson's conduct, these are the facts upon which an opinion must be formed. On coming into the Bay of Naples, he found a capitulation effected with the republicans or "rebels," as he styled them, of which he disapproved. It had been solemnly signed by the vicar-general of the Sicilian king; by the commanders of all the allied forces, and among them, by

³⁷ Letter to Mr. Stephens.—*Nicolas*, iii. 521, *ante*.

the British officer in command. Virtually agreed on for several days, it had been signed for more than thirty-six hours, and accident alone prevented all its stipulations from being already executed; but though every preparation had been made, nothing had been actually done to carry them into effect beyond the cessation of hostilities which the armistice in itself accomplished, and Nelson had at least an excuse for saying that it was still regarded as incomplete, because when he entered the bay a flag of truce was still flying both from the castles and the men-of-war. This denoted the suspension of hostilities, not their final termination. The armistice was in fact to last until the capitulation should be complete. Instantly on arriving in the bay, Lord Nelson adopted the view that the capitulation could not be valid without the ratification of the king. He desired Cardinal Ruffo to apprise the republicans who still had possession of the castles, that he could not suffer its terms to be fulfilled. From this view he never wavered, and referring the question to the king, he acted on the king's orders, when his decision arrived refusing to be bound by it.

In the interim, it is true that, pressed by the strong protest of Ruffo, of the Turkish and of the Russian commanders, he permitted them to carry the terms of the capitulation into effect so far as the embarkation of the garrisons. But he did so after having distinctly stated that they must be considered as placing themselves unreservedly at the disposal of the king.

In adopting the opinion that nothing had been actually done at the period of Lord Nelson's arrival to carry the capitulation into effect, that alternative is selected to which the facts all seem to lead. Those punctually acquainted with the investigation of fact know well the fallibility of human testimony, and how dangerous it is to rely upon mere general statements made from memory, especially when there is no opportunity of sifting even the recollection of the person who makes them. A written contemporaneous document is often, in reconciling the conflicts of evidence, worth all the oral testimony that can be given by those who speak only from memory.

The written documents place it perfectly beyond doubt that the castles were not occupied by the allied troops until the 26th. This cardinal fact is in effect decisive of the whole question. But there is in addition the contemporaneous statement of Lord Nelson himself, the petition of the prisoners, and the letter of

Captain Foote, written on the morning of the 24th, all irresistibly leading to the conclusion that nothing had really been done when the British squadron entered the bay.

Against this there are, no doubt, the statements of Colletta and Pepe, open to the observations already made, still more open to the comment that, evidently writing in entire ignorance of the protest of Ruffo and the consequent struggle between the cardinal and Lord Nelson, they were in fact unacquainted with the most essential part of the transaction.

Colletta is proved beyond all doubt to be mistaken in alleging that the surrender of the castles took place before the arrival of Lord Nelson's fleet. This mistake deprives his testimony upon the other point of all weight.

Captain Foote's statement that "some parts of the agreement had been performed," is very unsatisfactory and vague, especially when we compare it with his own account of his interview with Lord Nelson, and with the written statement which he handed to the admiral on his arrival. It does not tell us what parts were so performed, and the probability is that the statement refers to something that occurred relating to the hostages, a matter which rests in great obscurity. Indeed, had the embarkation partially taken place, it is impossible to suppose that the fact would not have been clearly stated by Captain Foote.

It must, however, be said that there is a general belief among the families of many of the Neapolitan patriots, that several of them had embarked before Lord Nelson's arrival, and the names of some have been mentioned with regard to whom it is alleged that documentary evidence can be adduced to that effect.

Neither must we omit that a statement to the same effect has been made by a British traveller, who accompanied the fleet of Lord Nelson from Sicily to Naples, and who takes upon himself to say, that when that fleet entered the bay "the garrisons were embarked, and ready to sail for Toulon."³⁸ The book, however, in

³⁸ "The Neapolitan patriots, unwilling to trust to the faith of their own government, had all determined to emigrate, and were actually embarked and ready to sail to Toulon, when unhappily Lord Nelson made his appearance in the bay in consequence of the French fleet having returned to France. He had brought with him the British ambassador, Sir W. Hamilton, and his far-famed beautiful and fascinating lady, the favourite of the Hero of the Nile! When this trio beheld from the deck of their ship, the white flags flying on the walls of the castles, they were horror-struck; and their dismay was greatly

which Mr. Pryse Lockhart Gordon makes this statement was not written until 1830, thirty-one years after the transaction, and it was perfectly possible for a young man to have been on board one of the vessels of the fleet, and actually know nothing of the real state of affairs.

All this is consistent with the statement adopted in the text, that after the appearance of the fleet in the bay in the morning, and between that hour and the anchoring of the vessels in the afternoon, the Cardinal Ruffo and the Russian commander should have made some of the garrison go on board the vessels, which Captain Foote's letter shows, were in readiness on the morning of the 24th. Lord Nelson's signal was made to Captain Foote that he annulled the armistice; but this could not prevent Ruffo or Micheroux from proceeding as they pleased. It would appear very probable that they should hurry the partial execution of the capitulation, and Ruffo took the opportunity of securing the safety of some of the hostages and prisoners in the hands of the garrison, his anxiety for whom is said to have been the cause of his granting terms to the rebels.

This statement does not conflict with the documentary evidence which, it must be said, establishes beyond doubt that when Lord Nelson made the signal to annul the armistice, the terms of the

augmented when they found that the patriots had obtained honourable terms. The admiral gave immediate orders to disarm the rebels and traitors as he designated them, and to put them on board feluccas hired for the purpose, and moored at the sterns of the ships of war in the bay; a certain number of the officers (*alias* ring-leaders) being ordered into close confinement under charge of the captains, who on this occasion became their jailers.

"It was in vain that these gallant men remonstrated against such a monstrous breach of faith. 'Give them back, my lord, their castles and their arms,' said the brave Trowbridge, 'if the treaty must be broke, and let them live or die in their defence.' But this language did not accord with his lordship's feelings: the captains were informed that he had summoned them 'to obey, not to advise;' and 472 persons, comprehending men of high rank and talent, were confined for several months in their floating prisons, suffering every privation, exposed to the influence of a burning sun in the dog-days, half-starved on a short allowance, forbidden all communication with their families and friends, and daily insulted by a hired lazzaroni, sent by their barbarous enemies for this purpose. Finally, these unfortunate patriots were delivered over to the Junta, who transported them into the dungeons and caves of the Lipari and other islands, from whence but few issued alive."—*Gordon's Personal Reminiscences*, vol. ii. p. 341.

capitulation had not been executed, and that the surrender of the castles did not take place for two days more, and that they were given up after Lord Nelson's positive announcement that the terms of the capitulation could not be observed unless they received the sanction of the king.

With reference to this announcement there is one, and only one part of the transaction upon which the evidence does not throw full light. It has already been observed that it is just possible that some soldiers of the garrison may have embarked under the belief that the terms of the capitulation were to be observed. This supposition derives some countenance from the frequency of the complaints of bad faith. We have nowhere a distinct account of the manner in which Lord Nelson's determination was conveyed to the castles. Nelson's letter to Admiral Duckworth contains the statement that "Trowbridge and Ball are gone to the cardinal for him to read my declaration to the French and rebels."³⁹ This, however, was followed by the protest of Ruffo and the other two commanders, and by Nelson's statement that he would not oppose the embarkation taking place. Of what passed with the castles we have no certain account. In another letter Nelson states, "on his (Cardinal Ruffo's) refusal, to send in a joint declaration to the French and rebels, I sent in my note, and on which the rebels came out of the castles."⁴⁰

Cardinal Ruffo's refusal to send in a joint declaration was before the drawing up of Lord Nelson's proclamation, which was sent by Captains Trowbridge and Ball to the cardinal that he might read it to the rebels; and Nelson's statement just leaves room for the possibility that it was left to Cardinal Ruffo to carry the message, and that he permitted the troops to embark without doing so. That Lord Nelson believed the garrisons had full notice of his determination is plain, and if they had not, the blame would rest with those who undertook the execution of the embarkation, and not with the British admiral. It is, however, exceedingly improbable that the garrisons in the forts could for days have remained ignorant of the opposition offered by Nelson, which for the space of two whole days prevented the execution of the

³⁹ Letter to Admiral Duckworth.—*Nicolas*, vol. iii. p. 387, *ante*.

⁴⁰ Letter to Mr. Davison, May 9th, 1800.—*Nicolas*, vol. iii. p. 510.

capitulation. The improbability is increased by the fact upon which Pepe can hardly be mistaken, although he may be as to the time, that whenever the embarkation took place, the troops were driven on board the polacres by the Russians, and without the honours of war.⁴¹ This is almost decisive proof that they were apprised of the altered state of affairs.

These observations are not intended to justify the breach of the capitulation. If Grotius correctly states the law of nations, that capitulation was beyond the power of any one to annul, but it needs no reference to this law to tell that it was one which ought to have been respected. That Nelson permitted his devotion to the Neapolitan court, his hatred of revolutionary principles, or the influence of evil counsels, or all combined, to lead him to a contrary conclusion, is a fact which every admirer of his character must lament—the more so as it made him a party to acts of vengeance which under any circumstances inflict upon their perpetrators everlasting disgrace. It is not necessary, nor is it just, to add to this the imputation of any personal breach of faith. The charge against Nelson is that he repudiated, or enabled the Sicilian court to repudiate, the terms granted to the republicans by their officers.

⁴¹ The fact is distinctly stated in Lord Nelson's letter to Mr. Stephens—"When the rebels surrendered they came out of the castles as they ought, without any honours of war," (see note 2), yet strange to say, in the memorial to Lord Nelson from the prisoners already cited, it is alleged that "the troops of his Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias attended the march of the garrison, with the honours of war, out of the forts on the side of the arsenal of the marine, where they grounded their arms, and embarked in fourteen transports to be conveyed to Toulon."

This they positively state occurred *after* the arrival of the British fleet. Compare this with Pepe's account that *on the evening before the arrival of Lord Nelson*, the patriots began to evacuate the different castles, not as had been agreed upon, with the honours of war, but shamefully driven before the Russian soldiers until they reached the vessels destined to bear them thence."

So difficult is it to extract the facts of history even from contemporaneous accounts.

The language of the memorial is peculiar: "the Russian troops attended the garrisons with all the honours of war." We may perhaps conjecture the truth to be that something occurred which was very different from a garrison marching out with the honours of war, with "drums beating and colours flying," but which the unfortunate "rebels" or "patriots" interpreted as its equivalent.

Lord Nelson's reply is that such terms it was beyond the power of these officers to grant, and that he arrived just in time to annul them without any breach of faith. Whether in this he formed a right judgment is the question upon which history must pronounce.

For the execution of Caraccioli, Nelson unhappily made himself responsible, but it would not be fair to charge his memory with all the acts of vengeance in which the court of Naples revelled under shelter of his power. But however men must reject the terrible judgment which has been far too severely passed upon his acts, every impartial reader, especially when we remember the cruelties that followed, will feel that the memory of the British hero would have been more free from blame had no seductions of passion, of influence, or friendship prevailed on him to become the instrument of the vengeance of a blood-thirsty court; had he declared that a compact of mercy, once signed by a British officer, was sacred, and that no power on earth should drag to the dungeon or the scaffold the miserable wretches who had once been promised the protection of the British flag.

The page that records these transactions is one that every lover of the glory of England would wish to see blotted from the annals of the times.

II.—CRUELTIES OF THE NEAPOLITAN GOVERNMENT.

THE cruelties committed by the government of Ferdinand on his restoration in 1799, will ever remain an indelible stain upon the Bourbon dynasty. They appear, indeed, to have established a system of government in that realm, such as exists in no other country on the face of the globe, which has been continued with occasional suspensions down to our own days.

When we read of 30,000 persons imprisoned and waiting for trial for political offences, and of 4000 falling victims to the judicial vengeance of a restored king, the first impulse is to treat the statement as a gross exaggeration. Nevertheless, a careful examination of the authorities supplies evidence that compels belief.

Pepe, Colletta, and Botta supply ample records of these horrors.

All contemporaneous and incidental accounts confirm in the details all their leading characteristics. Pepe was in Naples at the time, but was from the 14th a prisoner enduring many of the horrors he describes. Charles Paya, in his work on Naples, published in Paris, in 1857, has collected some valuable information, and in the history of Count Orloff more will be found. The dismal story rests on the testimony of more than one eye-witness. The narrative of one of these, Vincenzo Coco, has never been impeached, and is that to which most frequent reference has been made.

Pepe was a young man of sixteen years of age. His youth and the influence of his family obtained for him a commutation of his punishment to perpetual exile. Previously he endured the misery of a prolonged imprisonment in the public granaries, and on board a corvette, under the cannon of the British fleet.

"The first day of our imprisonment," he says, "passed without our receiving any kind of nourishment, and we were dreadfully tormented by hunger and thirst. The officers on guard assured us that our sufferings were an inevitable result of the confusion produced by having upwards of 20,000 prisoners in the granary.

"It was not before the morning of the third day that they began to distribute to us a certain quantity of bread and water. I still recollect the eagerness with which I swallowed the water given to me, until want of breath compelled me to desist." ¹

For twenty-two days these wretched prisoners were compelled to lie half naked on the bare ground, subsisting on a scanty allowance of bread and water. Nor was their condition ameliorated by their removal on board a corvette, where they lay without covering on the boards.

Summoned before the inhuman Speciale, the young republican was complimented by his judge, with the decorous commentary on his unshaven beard and tattered garments, "Why you look like a brute." Provoked by some tart reply, the judge raised his inkstand to throw it at his head. On reflection, however, he contented himself with telling him with savage glee, "Do you suppose you are too young to be hanged? Mind we don't have you in a noose." ² After a miserable imprisonment, which lasted from June to December, in a gloomy dungeon, where he was chained with common malefactors, Pepe was conveyed, under a sentence of

¹ Pepe's Memoirs, English translation, vol. i. p. 97.

² *Ibid*, 111; note 3, *ibid*. 116.

perpetual exile, to Marseilles—a sentence which he shared with 4000 of his patriot associates.³

“The list of proscriptions,” writes Colletta, “arrived from Palermo which had been there compiled by the Queen after consulting old registers, and upon information supplied by spies employed during and since the republic.”

“Thirty thousand Neapolitans were undergoing imprisonment in the city alone, and as the old prisons were not sufficiently spacious to contain so many persons, the subterranean vaults of the castles, and other unhealthy cells were used for the purpose. To add to their sufferings, they were denied the usual conveniences of life—a bed, chair, light, and eating or drinking materials.”⁴

The worst horrors of imprisonment were in the dungeons of the island of Favignano, alluded to in the text.

“This island in the seas of Sicily, the *Ægusa* of the Latins, and in that time a prison notorious through the decrees of the Roman tyrants, rises from the sea to a great height in the shape of a cone, on whose summit a castle has been built. Within the castle there is a descent by steps cut the whole depth of the rock, until it reaches an artificial grotto, which well deserves its name of the fossa or pit. Here the sun’s rays never penetrate, and the cold is piercing, while only a dim light pervades the dense moisture which hangs in the atmosphere; it is inhabited by noxious animals, while man, however young and robust, soon dies there. This was the apartment assigned to nine of the prisoners, among whom the most noted were the Prince of Torella, who was an invalid,

³ Colletta, vol. i. English translation, p. 379.

⁴ *Ibid*, p. 379. Poerio, a name illustrious in the annals of Neapolitan martyrdom. “The advocate Poerio” was one of those who left the Castle of Uovo, trusting, as his relatives still declare, to the faith of the capitulation. His life was sustained in his imprisonment by a laundress, who continued secretly to convey sustenance, especially wine, to the dungeon in which he was confined. His life was thus preserved. Restored to his liberty by the Treaty of 1801 (*ante*, vol. i. p. 343), he occupied a distinguished position in Naples, under the government of Murat, by whom he was created a baron. He was a second time exiled after the revolution of 1820, but again returned to Naples, where he died in 1843.

His eldest son, Alexander, a volunteer in the patriotic armies of Venice, was killed in a conflict with the Austrians on the 27th of October, 1848.

His second son, the Baron Carlo, was one of the prisoners whom the English nation two years ago welcomed on their escape from the Neapolitan dungeons to the British shores.

and in advanced life ; the Marquis Corleto, of the house of Riari ; the advocate Poerio ; and the cavaliere Abbamonti."

Botta thus sums up in a few sentences the terrible result :—

"Great was the slaughter in the capital, as well by the tribunals as by the popular rage. Nor was it less in the provinces ; there perished in a manner always violent, often cruel, not less than 4000 persons, almost all eminent for their distinguished learning or their lineage, or their virtue—a horrible massacre."

But the story does not rest on the testimony of Neapolitan writers, however trustworthy.

The Abbé Montgaillard, a royalist and an emigré, thus describes the scenes that followed the publication of the royal edicts.

"Immediately commenced innumerable judicial cruelties. The most vivid pencil could not draw the picture of these horrible massacres and atrocious vengeance. Dignity, age, or sex, gave no security. They seized on all ranks, and those of the suspected who were spared by the executioners of the minister Acton, and escaped from the assassins of Cardinal Ruffo, were plunged into the dungeons of Lipari. During many weeks blood flowed in streams before the eyes of a prince free from passion, popular, and gifted with natural goodness, but whether it was that these multiplied executions wounded his sight, or that his advisers represented them to him as just and necessary punishments in the full development of which his presence would interfere, he hastened to return to Palermo."

"Horrible year of 1799, which will for ever blast the names of the queen, Maria Caroline, of her minister, the adventurer Acton, and Admiral Nelson. The Neapolitans for centuries will speak of this famous year 1799, when they wish to refer to an execrable epoch. There were put to death almost all who had made themselves remarkable by nobility of character, by bravery, by the virtues of goodness or amiability, by the brilliancy of their talent. The persons suspected of disaffection to the government were mercilessly sacrificed. For a long time still the prisons will give up innocent persons, and in the name of principles opposed to the French revolution, the atrocities were reproduced at Naples with which France was stained during the reign of terror. The Neapolitan atrocities are the more execrable." ⁶

⁶ L'Abbé Montgaillard.—*Histoire de France*, tom. v. pp. 218—229.

A French general who published an account of these transactions in 1803, under the title of B. N., an eye-witness, describes the Lazzaroni and the soldiers of Ruffo's army as commencing immediately indiscriminate domiciliary visits, dragging the inmates of the houses of both sexes prisoners to the boats of the English fleet, by whom they were conveyed to the isle of Procida. When the junta attempted to stop their violence by forbidding arbitrary arrests, "the 8th and 9th of July were celebrated by horrors from the recital of which my pen shrinks. Having lighted a great fire before the royal palace, they burned in the flames seven miserable beings whom they had just arrested. They carried their savage barbarity so far as to eat their quivering flesh. The arch-priest Rinaldi boasted of having taken part in this infamous banquet."⁶

By the junta all persons who had held office under the republic, were condemned to death without any form of judicial trial. "The commander Massa, Janvier Serra, the prince of Strongoli, Julien Colonna, and others whom it would be too tedious to enumerate, met their death in the castle of Euf with courage and intrepidity. The two monks, Belloni and Pistici, were hanged near to the Vicaria."

The junta of state could not agree on the punishment to be inflicted on the members of the legislative body. Some were of opinion that they ought all to be condemned to death: others thought the punishment ought to be proportioned to the guilt of each, and this opinion supported by Antonio La Rossa prevailed in spite of all the ministers.

They commenced with Cirillo the President—he was conducted into their presence for the purpose of being interrogated. Firm in his opinions, and sustained by the pride with which his reputation inspired him, he appeared calm and serene before his judges. In reply to the questions of his name and profession, he answered, "my name is Dominico Cirillo, under the despotism

⁶ These atrocities are mentioned by all writers. They were referred to in the speech of Mr. Fox in the House of Commons.—*An/c*, p. 342, note 17.

They are described by Count Orloff:—

"Il n'y avait plus dans cette grand cité que deux classes d'habitans, des bourreaux et des victimes. Ceux-ci étaient déchirés en lambeaux par une foule de cannibales—qui devoraient leur chairs palpitantes. D'autres après avoir été trainés dans les rues, étaient jetés, ou morts ou mourants, dans les buches allumés sur les places publiques."—*Le Comte Orloff, Mémoires Historiques sur la Royaume de Naples.*

I was a physician, under the republic a representative, before you to-day I am a hero."

Both he and Maria Pagano in vain pleaded the capitulation. The king had annulled it, and the judges declared it void. Pagano addressed an elaborate argument to his judges, and referred to the fact, that an earlier capitulation entered into by Cardinal Ruffo on his own authority, even before his appointment as vicar-general, had been respected by the king. In vain—the only favour extended to Cirillo was to permit him to die in company with his friends, and to spend his last night in their company. Four were brought to the scaffold together, Pagano, Ciago, and Pignatelli, with Cirillo.

"The next day," writes B. N., "they conducted to execution the rest of the representatives and ministers, but the executions were become so numerous and so familiar that they produced but a feeble impression, the names of the victims were scarcely known."⁷

Coco, an eye-witness of the scenes he describes, bears equal testimony to the horrors that attended the vengeance of the court. The first junta, that nominated by Cardinal Ruffo, advised the king that no act should be treated as treason committed after the occupation of Naples by the French troops; from that moment the French held the kingdom by the very same right in which it had been acquired by Ferdinand's own father, that of conquest, and the submission to the authority of the republic could not with any justice be treated as a crime. They also advised the king that whether as a matter of justice or expediency, the capitulation ought to be observed; of justice because it was binding, and of expediency because to violate it would be to shake all confidence in royalty, and to convert every civil war into one of extermination.

These counsels of justice and wisdom only caused the dismissal of those who gave them, and the substitution of men ready to execute the ferocious biddings of the court. The edicts which were issued had no pretence to the name of laws, they were commands of massacre. As the law of Naples was formerly, words could never amount to treason. One of these edicts

⁷ "Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire des derniers révolutions de Naples," pp. 169—228.

declared that every one should be punished with death who had during the republican ascendancy used language insulting to the king or the royal family; acts which were innocent at the time they were committed, were by these edicts declared now punishable with death. Anyone who had worn the national cockade was by another of them declared guilty of a capital offence. The sovereign power which thus visits with the penalty of death acts not forbidden at the time they were committed, has not in truth the sanction of law for the executions which it thus orders. The proceeding is nothing more or less than the arbitrary ordering for execution of certain individuals.

The edict which most flagrantly outraged every principle of justice was that which condemned to death all those who had in any way aided the so-called republic. The principle has been already stated that obedience to a government *de facto*, by the first principles of law, can never be a crime. This maxim which ought by every rule of justice to be held sacred, was plainly violated in the language of the edict itself.

In its application, those who administered it, seemed almost as if their object was to exhibit its injustice in the most revolting form. It was under this edict that Sanfelice was condemned to die for having accidentally disclosed the existence of a plot to assassinate the adherents of the only government then existing in Naples. Atrocious as was her sentence, it was surpassed by the one which sent to the scaffold a tailor for having made up the state dresses for some of the republican officials, or even by that which condemned to perpetual imprisonment in a dungeon the musician who set to music the words of a republican melody written by a friend.⁸

There is after all a sameness in the exhibition of the evil passions of human nature in all times and countries, and Speciale, the chief of the infamous tribunal, recalls in many strange points of coincidence the picture of Jeffreys. We read of the same brutal jesting with the sufferings of his victims, the same coarse and unfeeling insolence, while he added qualities of

⁸ Botta, vol. iii. p. 345.—Cimarosa was released from his dungeon by the intervention of the Russians. He did not long survive the treatment he had received: he died at Venice on his way to St. Petersburg, where, in his person, Italian art was seeking in the home of the "barbarian" Muscovite, a refuge from the cruelties which threatened it on the Italian soil.

his own, which even if he possessed them, Jeffreys had no opportunity of displaying.

One of the proscribed, Nicholas Fiani, was the object of some special hatred of the court. There was peculiar anxiety to obtain his conviction, but the process against him supplied no proof. He had been in early youth a friend of Speciale. He sent for him to come to his house, he affectionately embraced him, and told him he was now speaking, not to his judge, but to the friend of his early years. That he was anxious to save him, but that he could only do so by having from him a confession of the part he had really acted. The unhappy victim gave this, and gave it in writing; it was produced before the tribunal, and Fiani ordered for execution. To a young wife who came to beg her husband's life, he promised that his sentence should be commuted for that of perpetual exile. At the moment when he gave the assurance, her husband was on his way to execution. He excused himself by saying that he had done better for her—she was young and handsome, and could easily get another husband.*

Even the sentences of Speciale were not numerous enough, or sanguinary enough, for the bloodthirstiness of the court. The tribunal was more than once reproved for its remissness, and more than one of those upon whom they had pronounced the sentence of exile or imprisonment were sent to the scaffold by orders from the king. Yet there was no unwillingness on the part either of Speciale or his associates to shed blood. They inaugurated their judicial career by a new bargain with the executioner, and instead of the payment of six ducats, which was the established fee for each execution, they engaged him at a monthly salary, with an intimation that for a twelvemonth he was to hold himself each day at the disposal of the tribunal.

To cite all the trustworthy accounts of these dismal scenes would extend this note to too great length. The unhappy republicans were exposed in the first instance to the fury of the royalist banditti who plundered and pillaged the town. The description of their atrocities by a recent writer sums them up in a few words:

“Dark as are the crimes which stain the history of our race, humanity has seldom been disgraced by scenes so horrible as

* Colletta; Coco.—It is unnecessary to encumber the page by the individual references to each passage. The accounts are taken without alteration from the pages of Colletta and Coco.

those which followed. Universal carnage was but one feature of the atrocity; the details are sickening, many of them utterly unfit to be told. Some republicans were strangled with designed protraction of agony, others were burnt upon slow fires. The infuriated murderers danced and yelled round the piles on which their victims writhed, and it is even said that they were seen to snatch the flesh from the ashes and greedily devour it. The Lazzaroni, once more royal subjects, eagerly assisted in hunting down the rebels; during two whole days the massacre was uninterrupted, and death without torture was accepted as mercy."¹⁰

It needs the testimony of impartial witnesses personally cognisant of these facts to obtain for them implicit credence. That of B. N. has been already quoted. Two more may be cited, one from an English, another from a German traveller.

The work published by Mr. Gordon Lockhart has been already referred to. He went to Sicily in company with Lord Montgomerie, a nobleman who visited it for his health, and while there was employed in the diplomatic service of his country (*ante*, page 399). Mr. Gordon's intimacy with Lord Montgomerie gained him access to Lord William Bentinck and the best informed circles. In testifying to the atrocities committed at Naples, he describes scenes which he himself witnessed.

"The barbarities that were committed on the unhappy patriots, to which I was a daily witness, were most atrocious.

"One morning I met a crowd of savages carrying a human head on a pole, while a miscreant, holding up a severed limb and sucking the blood, exclaimed—'Eccolo il sangue d'un Jacobino—date mi a bere!' (Here is the blood of a Jacobin—give me something to drink). The bodies of many individuals were thus treated, and these horrid outrages encouraged by the junta.

"This military tribunal was instituted for the trial of the rebels.

"It consisted of five persons, tools of the queen, the president being a French renegade baron, in whom her Majesty could place implicit confidence. Probably such a jury has not existed in modern times, not excepting Robespierre and his blood-thirsty myrmidons."

"A proclamation announced by royal authority, that whoever should denounce a traitor would be rewarded on conviction (which

¹⁰ Colletta, vol. i. English translation, p. 384.

always followed) with a third of his property, and the name of the informer concealed. The most trifling pretences were sufficient evidence. Hair cropped *al Bruto*, wearing pantaloons (a French costume), having been intimate with French officers during the occupation of the city, were sufficient accusations to send a man to the gallows or a dungeon; and the more money he possessed the more certain was he of condemnation."¹¹

Similar is the account of Seume, a German traveller, who was not actually present at the time, but who visited Naples while the recollection of the events was still recent.

"All cruelties," he writes in his journey to Syracuse, "which we have heard of in Paris during the revolution, are humanity itself compared with those of Naples.

"What the democrats in Paris did singly, the royalist Lazzaroni and Calabrians in Naples have horribly improved upon. They have literally burned men alive, cut off pieces of their flesh, and forced their friends to eat of them—not to mention horrors still more shameful. A trustworthy person, a really good man, assured me that a man came to him with a bag full of noses and ears that had been cut off; he recounted to him the names of the owners. My informant added that he needed all his self-possession and discretion to avoid manifesting his disgust, lest he himself might become one of the victims.

"This took place under Cardinal Ruffo, whose humanity has been praised.

"The names of Admiral Nelson and Lady Hamilton are mentioned with horror and execration."¹²

The king's edict declared that any one who had defended his home against these atrocities by firing on the rabble was guilty of high treason, and should be punished with death.

Then followed the sittings in the capital of that merciless tribunal which was appointed to execute the queen's inhuman declaration, that no one above the rank of a common advocate should be left in Naples.

"It would be a tedious and a melancholy task," writes Colletta, "to describe instance after instance of the proceedings of the tyrants, and of the misery of their victims. I shall therefore only

¹¹ Lockhart Gordon's "Personal Reminiscences," vol. i. p. 225.

¹² "Journey to Syracuse."—*Seume's Works*, p. 181. German.

mention those which were most cruel and notorious. About 300 of the first men in the kingdom perished, without mentioning those who had been killed in fight, or during the riots. Of this unhappy number were Caraffa, Riario, Colonna, Caracciolo, five of the Pignatellis, and at least twenty more members of illustrious families: besides whom were seen men distinguished in letters or science, such as Cirillo, Pagano, Conforti, Russo, Ciaja, Fiorentino, Baffi, Falconieri, Logoteta, De Filippis, Albanese, Bagni, Neri, and many more, as well as men renowned for other reasons, such as Generals Federici, Massa, Manthone, Bishop Sarno, Bishop Natale, and the prelate Troise: besides Eleonora Pimental, a woman of unblemished character, and the unhappy girl Luiga Sanfelice. No other city or kingdom in the world has been equally impoverished by the loss of so many and of so high an order. The cases of the noble youths Serra and Riario, who were beheaded, were still more pitied by gentle hearts, neither of them having completed his twentieth year, while one of the name of Gensano, had hardly attained his sixteenth.”¹³

The name of another bishop is to be added to the list of victims, Serrao, Bishop of Potenza, continued with his flock during the ascendancy of the French; he was shot by the royalist rabble in his bed: “fortunate,” says the narrator, “in not being reserved for cruelties which emanated from higher quarters, and which were so much the more abominably atrocious as they were disguised under the forms of law, not of justice.”¹⁴

“Sir W. Hamilton,” writes Swinburne, an English traveller, well acquainted with Naples, “has given me a list of all the people executed upon the return of Cardinal Ruffo and the king, notwithstanding the capitulation. I enclose you a copy of it, by which you will see, as Sir W. says, that almost every man of worth and learning is destroyed or fled from Naples.

“He showed me the English letter which Cirillo wrote to him for his interference, but which Marshal Pignatelli took care should not be delivered to him till after the unfortunate petitioner’s

¹³ Spalding’s “Italy,” vol. iii. p. 50.

¹⁴ De Potter’s “Life of Ricci” (Roscoe’s translation) vol. ii. p. 392.

The murder of the good bishop was horribly avenged. A friend residing in Potenza, pretending a fanatic zeal in the royalist cause, invited seventeen persons who were known as the murderers to a banquet. After dinner he put them all to the sword.—*Colletta*, vol. i. p. 315.

execution. It is manly and simply affecting. The Duke of Cassano was put to death, and his wife would have been so likewise, but the queen had her life saved, because it was known she hated her, and she thought her death would be ascribed to personal vindictiveness. The infant son of young Gensano was executed, and his father near dying of grief in consequence." ¹⁵—*Swinburne's Letters from the Courts of Paris, Naples, &c.*, vol. ii., p. 292.

These executions were followed by new commissions to try deserters in the army and the navy, and finally by that general visitation of the provinces which went "to purge Naples of the enemies of the altar and the throne," and which swelled the number of the victims of this terrible proscription to an amount unexampled, in proportion to the population, in the history of mankind; nearly one in fifty of the adult male population was punished more or less severely, one in two hundred and fifty perished on the gallows.¹⁶

"There are upwards of 40,000 families," writes Sir Thomas Trowbridge, "who have relations confined.

This system of government by terror commenced with the æra of the French revolution. The execution of her sister, and the atrocities of Robespierre appeared almost to have driven the queen into a frenzied imitation of the horrors of the Parisian crimes. There was a reign of terror at Naples from 1792 to 1797.¹⁷ It is on record, that when Vanni pressed for the application of the torture to Medicis, he was able to point to a royal decree which desired the torture to be applied to suspected persons, "as if they were dead bodies."¹⁸

The unhappy queen appears never to have lost the passion for

¹⁵ Colletta gives a different account. He says that his father had the inconceivable baseness a short time after the execution of his son to invite the judges of the tribunal to a feast.

It will be observed that Mr. Swinburne contradicts the generally received story that Cirillo refused to ask for pardon, a story in all probability the invention of the man who kept back his letter.

¹⁶ The population of the continental kingdom of Naples in 1782, was estimated at 4,700,000. The proportion of adult males in such a population would not much exceed one million.

¹⁷ *Ante*, pp. 313, 314.

¹⁸ Colletta, vol. ii., English translation, p. 245.

blood which charity may almost attribute to that morbid desire for imitation which sometimes follows even on the horror produced by the contemplation of great crimes.¹⁹ After her second flight to Sicily, she renewed her relations with the most sanguinary miscreants in Calabria, and if we add to the victims of the massacres of 1799 those who fell under the licentious outrages of Mammone, Fra Diavolo,²⁰ and the rest of the murderous brigands who desolated

¹⁹ During the whole period of her second residence in Sicily, her imagination appears to have been haunted by the terrors of Jacobin plots against royalty, against which she fancied she could protect herself by the employment of spies and the inflictions of the most cruel punishments.

Lord Valentia in his MS. journal already referred to describes the report of her death in 1811 as diffusing among the population of Palermo unusual joy.

“The joy expressed last year when the queen was ill, showed most completely the real state of the public feelings. It was only a few days previously to the festival of Santa Rosalia that she had an attack of apoplexy and continued insensible during the whole day. The people ran up and down the streets congratulating each other, and returning thanks to the saints for having at length heard their prayers. When Lady Amherst went to the palace to make her inquiries, the very people in waiting did not dissemble their satisfaction, but openly replied, ‘Thank God, she was gone at last.’ Even Lady Circello said to Lady A., that the poor Sicilians had been tormented long enough, that they were now released, and things would go on better, for they could manage the king without her. Nothing could equal the dismay and confusion which her recovery gave rise to. The courtiers were alarmed lest she should hear of the satisfaction they had expressed at her illness, and the populace were nearly driven to desperation by their disappointment.”—*MS. Journal of Lord Valentia*.

The hatred of the queen to the English, whose presence restrained her cruelty and despotism, has been already mentioned. Mr. Lockhart Gordon, to whose means of information allusion has been already made, tells us that she had proposed to Murat to cause a general massacre of the English army, and to place the island under his protection, rather than submit any longer to “the tyranny of the English.”

The plot was betrayed to Lord William Bentinck, who was in possession of the clearest proofs of her Majesty’s guilt.

“This vindictive woman had the effrontery to include her own son-in-law, the Duke of Orleans, in her list of the proscribed; and the chief of the *sbirri* had orders to seize on his Royal Highness at his country-house, a short distance from the city; but the descendant of St. Louis resisted, and sallying forth at the head of his household, armed in the best manner they could, ‘on the spur of the occasion,’ gave battle to the ragged ruffians, and drove them back with broken pates!”—*Gordon’s Reminiscences*.

²⁰ The atrocities committed by the brigand leaders, who were employed in the service of the Neapolitan court in Calabria, in some respects surpass any-

Calabria in the name of loyalty and religion, the lives sacrificed to the democratic rage of the revolutionists in France do not bear,

thing recorded of the French revolution. The reader who has a taste for the ghastly tales of the exploits of monsters of cruelty and blood, will find it abundantly, gratified in the pages of Coco, Colletta, and Botta, which describe the Calabrian brigand chiefs.

"Fra Diavolo," was the name given by the populace to Michele Pezza, a man on whose head in peaceful times the government had set a price, and whose wonderful escapes had obtained for him the title which expressed that he combined the good luck of a friar and a devil, the two beings to whom a superstitious proverb of Calabria attributed the most marvellous fortune.

Gaetano Mammone was a miller, who appears to have taken up the occupation of a brigand chief under the royalist banners to gratify a fiendish appetite for blood. The stories relating to him, that are vouched for by many trustworthy writers, seem almost incredible. He is said during the civil war to have put to death in cold blood more than 400 persons with his own hands, not unfrequently gratifying himself and his guests in their drunken revels by slaughtering for their amusement the unhappy wretches whom he had placed in confinement. A head newly cut off was a common ornament of his table at dinner, and he drank his wine from a human skull. Atrocities like these are unhappily not altogether incredible. The stories of the Cæsars, and of Ivan the Terrible of Russia, belong to the regions, not of fable, but of authentic history, and nowhere could the lessons of cruelty have been more easily learned by a merciless heart than in the brigand war of Calabria. How completely the minds of men were seized with the ideas of sanguinary revenge, is shown by an incident which occurred to Sir Thomas, then Captain Hardy. A devoted royalist sent him some grapes as a present: in the same basket was contained the head of a Jacobin. The sender never thought of doubting that the sight would be an acceptable one to the British sailor.

Pronio and Rodio were two other of the chiefs of this guerilla war. Pronio had been in early life an ecclesiastic, but was convicted of homicide: and sent to the galleys. He managed to escape, and, after infesting for some time the woods of Calabria, found in the royalist service the path to honours, security and wealth.

Rodio appears to have been a gentleman by birth and education. He was the only one of these guerilla chieftans unstained by crime, and seems to have embarked in the warfare from devotion to the royalist cause.

Calabria for the ten years following the year 1799 presented a state of society unparalleled in the annals of civilised nations. Deeds of heroic daring, nay of what appeared to be lofty patriotism, threw something like a relief over the acts of fierce cruelty and of wild revenge which exhibited the most demoniac passions of the human heart. The story of Calabrian life through the struggles of 1799, the insurrections aided by Sir Sidney Smith, and encouraged by the queen, down to the execution of those terrible decrees by which Manhes made a desert and called it peace, would form a chapter in the romance of history which few narratives as well authenticated could

in proportion to the population, any comparison with those which were in the kingdom of Naples sacrificed to the royalist vengeance, which was planned and directed by the Bourbon Court.

Difficult, indeed, would it be to calculate the sum of human misery and anguish which was caused by the inhuman proscription of those who were driven into exile and poverty, while all their possessions were confiscated to the state.²¹

It must not be forgotten that among the edicts issued by Ferdinand on his restoration was one destroying all the municipal privileges of the city of Naples, privileges which in their very forms were traceable to the days when it was a colony of the Greeks, and another confiscating the property of the religious houses on the ground that the monks had been the partisans of the republic.

In contemplating the inhuman prosecutions which succeeded the restoration of Ferdinand, we cannot avoid being struck by the fact, that the lowest and the worst of the rabble were on the side of the king—and that their passions and their vices were employed as the instruments of royalist vengeance. Both in the city of Naples and in Calabria there was kindled a servile war, and the atrocities that followed combined the apparently inconsistent traits that mark the crimes of despotism and those of popular fury. The whole of the educated and middle classes of Naples were on the side of the republic, the rabble espoused that of the Bourbons. “The effusions of loyalty,” writes Nelson, “from the lower order of the people to their Father, for by no other name do they address

surpass. Yet while the testimonies to the general result are abundant, but few descriptions of particular scenes are preserved. Some there are in the military despatches published in General Bunbury’s narrative of the great war. Although the incident itself belongs to a later period, the reader will find some idea of what brigand life was, in the description in Mr. Keppel Craven’s travels, of the shooting of the band of the Vardarelli, in 1818 (*Craven’s Tour*, pp. 37—57). The extermination of the Vardarelli band accidentally witnessed by the English traveller, rises to the dignity of an historical event in the Neapolitan annals.—*Colletta*.

To Mammone, the most sanguinary monster of them all, King Ferdinand sent an autograph letter—no small compliment from the monarch not very partial to epistolary feats—in which he designated him “my general and my friend.”

²¹ “To this day families who were in easy circumstances can with difficulty procure the necessaries of life, and often have to beg for food.”—*Colletta*, vol. i. p. 285.

the king, is truly moving—with some few exceptions the conduct of the nobles has been infamous—and it delights me to see that his majesty remarks the difference in the most proper manner.”²² “Everyone in Naples who knows how to read is a Jacobin,” was the judgment of the queen, and in the spirit of this conviction was her declaration, that everyone above the rank of a common advocate must die.

How can we calculate the effect upon Naples of the proscription which was carried out in accordance with such a maxim?—which brought to the scaffold, almost all in the better ranks of society who were distinguished for the talents that illustrate, the virtues that adorn, or the character that dignifies life?

In these transactions at Naples, we see a community suddenly deprived of all its best members—professional and literary merit swept from its society. The scale was turned against the accused in the trembling balance of judgment by the damning evidence that he had taught his son mathematics. “Have you no better occupation for him in times like these?” roared Speciale to the unhappy father, whom this evidence sent to his doom. In this spirit all the judgments were pronounced. “He is a notary and a clever man, he must die,”—was his decision in a case in which his colleagues were inclined to mercy. Nothing was safe in Naples except the dull and undistinguished ignorance, which in trying times had passed in unnoticed obscurity.

It has been already observed that many of these sentences were pronounced in defiance of that principle founded in common justice, that obedience to a government, actually in possession of the seat and authority of power, can never be a crime.²³ This has been carried so far, that the rightful sovereign has frequently punished men for treason committed against the usurper. The citizen is not obliged to live in a state of perpetual war. He is protected if he gives his obedience to the ruler who is proclaimed by actual possession of the authority, to be at least, for the time, the one to whom his allegiance is due. For any act against him before he was driven from his throne, Ferdinand might indeed justly punish on his restoration—it was rebellion against the reigning sovereign. But from the time that his place was occupied by

²² Letter to Lord Keith.—*Nicolas*, vol. iii. p. 407.

²³ See Sir W. Blackstone's observations on the English law of treason, and the application of this principle during the “Wars of the Roses.”

another power, he had no right to treat as treasonable any act of adherence to that power. The violation of this principle becomes doubly guilty when we remember that Ferdinand left his capital in opposition to the entreaties of his people. That the regent whom he left—in spite of the protest of the municipality, formally surrendered Naples to the French, and actually burned the ships of the national navy to prevent any resistance being made. And yet on his return one of the first edicts of the king destroyed the time-honoured privileges of that municipality, for submitting to the conqueror to whom they had been handed over.

This was not all. Many of the sentences were pronounced for acts which, at the time of their committal, were not forbidden by any law, and which could not, therefore, have been justly punished had the government of Ferdinand been reigning at the time. The edict which denounced as a traitor anyone who had spoken disrespectfully of the king or royal family during the days of the republic, has, it may be hoped, no parallel in the history of legislation.

To illegalities such as these, it is not necessary—in order to condemn the conduct of the restored government to execration—to add the guilt of a violated capitulation, of the perverted forms of justice, and of so-called tribunals degraded to be the mere executioners of the vengeance which they were ordered to inflict. Had everything else been right—had the acts been those of unquestioned rebellion against a sovereign in possession of the royal authority, had they been plainly treasons against the existing law—the mode of trial would have been sufficient to brand with infamy all who took part in the proceedings. The English reader, almost of necessity, turns to those passages in our history which have loaded with execration the memory of Jeffreys. The rebellion of Monmouth was a plain and unquestioned treason—all who aided him were as undoubtedly guilty as himself. No *ex post facto* laws were needed to bring them within the penalty of their crime. No new tribunal was established to reverse the ordinary mode of procedure and escape all the restraints of judicial rule—yet 320 executions, in the western counties of England,²⁴ were sufficient to hand down, for nearly 200 years, the memory of “the Bloody Assize,” and associate that of Jeffreys with the infamy that belongs to the

²⁴ Lord Macaulay's History, vol. ii. p. 225.

degraded instrument of cruelties, of which history has been puzzled in appropriating the odium between the sovereign and the judge.

It is unnecessary to point out the contrast between this and the crimes which restored royalty perpetrated at Naples. The resemblance in many respects between Jeffreys and Speciale has been already suggested. Even in his worst act, that of obtaining confessions on a promise of pardon, the latter is not altogether without precedent in his English prototype: Jeffreys browbeat or wheedled his victims into pleas of guilty in open court. Speciale deluded them into confessions in the privacy of his chamber. But freed from all restraints of judicial prudence, exempt from publicity, at liberty to make both the law and create the evidence, with the power of torture to extort the acknowledgment of unreal crimes,—not obliged to confront their victim with those who bore witness against him, at liberty to act upon their own suspicions or the suspicions of the court,—the tribunals of Naples far surpassed the enormities which his worst enemies have ever attributed to the English judge. In a community not more numerous than the population among whom Jeffreys found 320 victims, the tribunals of “the good king” Ferdinand sent 4000 victims to their grave. More than that number were doomed to dungeons worse than death, or consigned to a perpetual exile, stripped of all their possessions, and condemned to wander in poverty in foreign lands.

No wonder that these events have left upon the Neapolitan nation and its government an impression which sixty years have been unable to efface. The terrible example had been set of governors deliberately violating all law. Those whose very existence as rulers is in the character of guardians of right, had openly trampled it under foot. The lawlessness of government became at Naples an established fact; how often the kingdom has felt the effects of that fatal precedent its subsequent history must tell.

The parallel, if it can be called such, with the English Bloody Assize, suggests the question—If England had been subjected in 1685, to the process which Naples endured in 1799, what would have been her fate? If James II. and Jeffreys could have cut off all in the nation that were exalted by virtue, by talent, and love of liberty, what would have been the result? Where would be her constitution and her liberties, if her Bloody Assize had stricken her patriots as those of Naples were mown down?

It may be forgiven, even to the calmness of historical reflection, to suggest that in the pride and security of our long-established freedom, we may not refuse our sympathy to a people who, if they have not been equally fortunate in asserting their liberties, can, in their very failure, boast a longer list of martyrs to liberty than our own.

ADDENDUM.

CHAPTER VIII. PAGE 425.

[The following Note was accidentally omitted in its proper place.]

THE report of General Championnet to the French Directory of the taking of Naples contains a very vivid account of the resistance which his troops encountered from the heroic resistance of the undisciplined Lazzaroni. For three days they disputed every inch of the ground; fired on the French troops from the houses, the possession of which they absolutely disputed, and rushed with desperate bravery upon the bayonets of the advancing battalions. The Castle of St. Elmo, by a stratagem, was placed in the hands of the republicans; its cannon played upon the streets; but neither the fire of the cannon, nor the charge of the bayonet, could quell the courage of the undaunted Lazzaroni.

After the armistice agreed upon with the Neapolitan commanders, information reached Championnet that the Lazzaroni had risen. Mack was compelled to fly for his life and take refuge with the French, the royalist soldiers were disarmed, and the artillery seized. The flying soldiers of the Royalist army came in crowds to the camp of the invaders. The Lazzaroni issued from the city to attack the French troops, and after desperate conflicts were driven back. Championnet ordered his troops to advance upon the town, and occupy the strong positions. "I was not," he writes, "prepared for the resistance they met. Volleys of musketry assailed them as they entered the streets." The rest can be most effectually told in his own words.

"General Duhesme found still more formidable obstacles on the left; he marched forward to close on the town. He was attacked in three of his columns, but the 27th light regiment, the grenadiers of the 73rd, and a battalion of the 64th of the line, repulsed and overthrew the Lazzaroni and the troops of the line who were mixed with them. This engagement was very brisk. General Mounier gave the example of boldness, and fell wounded. Captain Ordenneau, aide-de-camp to General Duhesme, was disabled by a canister shot. The wound of Mounier was considered dangerous. This misfortune added to the regrets of the army, which would lose in him one of its best generals. General Broussier and Adjutant-General Thiebault pursued the brigands, and drove them into the town. They brought up

twenty pieces of cannon; the houses were set on fire; the streets were heaped up with dead bodies. Night put an end to the combat, and General Duhesme recalled his troops. The situation of Naples became frightful for its inhabitants. I believed it my duty to summon them to surrender and lay down their arms. The Lazzaroni fired on the parley; their excess of madness gave me great pain. The army passed the night in position on the heights of Naples. The insolence of the besieged enraged me. The brave men whom the army had lost, the cowardly assassinations which were every day committed, justified the desire for vengeance. I gave the order to attack on the morrow—the columns to move, armed with lighted torches; to advance only from ruin to ruin, and to shoot all who carried arms.

“Meanwhile, I find that the Neapolitan patriots are worthy to be the friends of the French. They had taken possession of the fortress of St. Elmo. The brave Moliterno commanded them. I took advantage of the night to throw into the fortress two battalions. They were received with cries of ‘Vive la république.’ The cannon thundered from the fortress. It was the signal agreed upon. The army rushed forward, it attacked with fury, it was received with the same. Never was there a more obstinate combat or more frightful scene. The Lazzaroni, those amazing men—those regiments, both foreign and Neapolitans, which had escaped from the wreck of the army which had fled before us, become heroes when shut up in Naples. They fought in every street. The ground was disputed foot to foot. The Lazzaroni were commanded by fearless chiefs; the fort of St. Elmo thundered on them, the terrible bayonet plunged through their ranks, they retreated in order, returned to the charge and advanced with audacity, and often gained possession of the ground. Nevertheless, half the city was conquered by the end of the day.

* * * * *

“I had hoped that the terrible example of vengeance would compel the Lazzaroni to ask for quarter. Far from it; they kept up skirmishes the entire night, they multiplied their attacks, and awaited undauntedly the advance of the French columns. I ordered then a third attack—the storming of Castle Nuovo and the bastion of the Carmine, and the firing of Basso Porto, the quarter of the Lazzaroni. The combat was renewed with fury. The French are conquerors at all parts. The Castle Nuovo is carried—there remains nothing but the port of Carmine.

“The city is threatened with a general sack. At last I offer them again terms of peace. I interest the patriots who escaped from misfortune. I persuade the priests, the people listen to them. One of the leaders of the Lazzaroni was gained over. Hope revived, the peaceable citizen showed himself, tranquillity was re-established, and the very same people who fought so desperately for a perfidious king, returning from their madness, blessed the French—made the air ring with shouts of ‘Vive la république.’”—*Despatch of General Championnet to the French Directory.—Pepe’s Mémoires*, vol. i. p. 46.

Such were the Neapolitan populace before they were debased and demoralised by the frightful scenes of the restoration of 1799.

Colletta who, though a Neapolitan, had no partiality for the Neapolitan royalists, gives a still more vivid picture of the heroic resistance of the populace, a resistance in itself sufficient to redeem the Neapolitan character from any imputation of want of courage.

The resistance of the undisciplined masses of the peasantry in the country is acknowledged both by Colletta and the French historians to have been as brave.

END OF VOL. I.

